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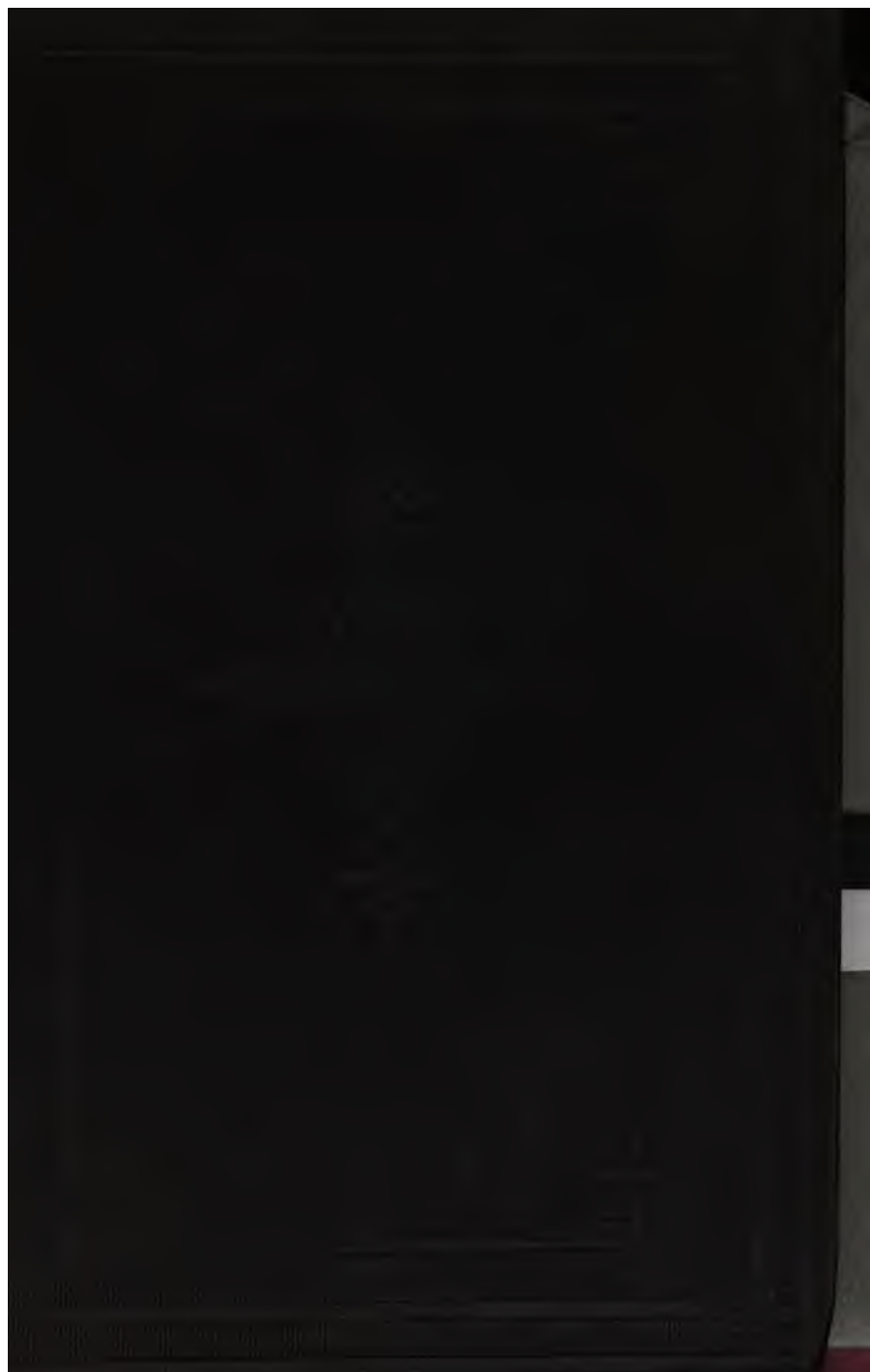
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THE
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VOLUME V.

PUNCH'S LETTERS TO HIS SON.
PUNCH'S COMPLETE LETTER WRITER.
AND
SKETCHES OF THE ENGLISH.

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PUNCH'S LETTERS TO HIS SON,
PUNCH'S COMPLETE LETTER WRITER,
AND
SKETCHES OF THE ENGLISH.

BY
DOUGLAS JERROLD.



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PREFACE.

It may be charged against these LETTERS that they are not written in milk upon rose-leaves. The charge is undeniably true. The LETTER-WRITER, with all decent meekness, pleads guilty to it. A porcupine—even an infant porcupine, with its quills in the down—is not a lamb; a snow-white lamb, cropping trefoil and wild thyme, and now and then taking a jocund gambol, no doubt to promote its digestion. But for this do we blame the porcupine? Do we call it a monster, simply because its quills are not wool? No: it was created a porcupine, and the point to be considered is this.—Is it a poor porcupine, a porcupine of average merits, or in all things a most exemplary porcupine? “But,” it may be retorted, “what is a porcupine, at the very best? Whereas a lambkin”—

The cause of preference is at once foreseen and acknowledged. Lamb is so eatable—so delicious, whether cooked for “Arabian Nights” entertainments, with pistachio-nuts, or served with mint and vinegar in British dining-rooms. The truth of this is undeniable. But—with all delights granted in lamb—did the reader ever eat a porcupine, a young porcupine?—for an old one is not recommended for table trial, even though he should, in his own person, supply toothpicks as well as meat.—But a young porcupine?

We have it on the authority of M. Charlevoix, who passed many years, their honoured guest, with the North American

Indians, that a young porcupine is most delectable food. You must take him in the tender season of porcupinehood ; in fact, he must be little more than a baby porcupine, his infant quills almost callow—little more, as we have said, than in the down. You must remorselessly skin him ; then bake him in an oven of hot stones : serve directly when done, and his flesh—says M. Charlevoix—is nourishing, succulent, delicious ! let us charitably, fondly hope, bearing some affinity to that of his bristly, or rather, silky cousin—sucking-pig.

Now, it is wished that these LETTERS should be treated by the reader as North American Indians are wont to treat early porcupines. They may bear about them the rudiments of quills,—but let him try what is under them ; strip off their outward clothing, and then, liberally hoping the best, let him fall-to, even as he would make essay on the flesh and bones of a flayed young porcupine.

“SKETCHES OF THE ENGLISH” were originally printed in a work called “HEADS OF THE PEOPLE.” As that work was the work of several pens, it has been thought proper to give another title to the essays—for they are rather essays than portraits, or even sketches—that make a part of this volume.

D. J.

26, CIRCUS ROAD, ST. JOHN'S WOOD,
Jan. 28, 1853.

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PUNCH'S LETTERS TO HIS SON.

Dedication.

TO

THE RIGHT HON. THE LORD CHAMBERLAIN,

(WHOEVER HE MAY BE.)

MY LORD,—Take my word for it, you have greater reason to be proud of this Dedication than of your wand of office. Having read it, you may, for the remainder of your official life, walk in the eyes of all men, at least half an inch higher. As, however, persons in your exalted rank are not always inevitably promoted to the eminence by the invincibility of their reasoning powers, or the subtlety of their wit, it may perhaps be necessary for me to explain to you why, from this day forward, you should enjoy an increase of official altitude. Few things irk a man more, than to know he has inflicted the heaviest, yet withal the sweetest, obligation on another, who nevertheless obstinately remains in the most Stygian ignorance of the fact. Fancy, my lord, a pearl-diver—your lordship may possibly guess the perils of the trade—having plunged to the bottom of the oozy deep ; strange, horrid monsters about him ; the ocean booming and rolling over him ; fearful thoughts of his wife and little ones stirring in his breast ; imagine him groping for the treasure which, it may be, is destined to repose upon the palpitating bosom of an Eastern queen. He rises to the surface of the deep—he is on dry land. Happy diver ! he hath fished up a union—

“ Richer than that which four successive kings
In Denmark's crown have worn ! ”

He believes his fortune made ; the precious pearl has enriched him, his wife, and little ones for life. Alas, no ! the waywardness

of fate denies to his pearl the asylum of a crown—refuses to it the ear of a queen. No: that pearl, by the very wilfulness of destiny, is flung among the wash of pigs, and is swallowed with a grunt by that bacon hog, altogether unconscious of the treasure to be dissolved into nothing by his porcine chyle. Now he must be a hardhearted man—a lout, a churl—who would deny to the poor pearl-diver the barren satisfaction of pinching the pig's tail, to assure the beast, as well and as reasonably as a beast can be assured of anything, that he has swallowed the jewel—that he has the worth of I know not how many bars of gold in his ignorant bowels. No: justice—who though she may not choose to use them, yet keeps her scales and weights in every man's breast—justice declares that the man shall have the rightful privilege of pinching the pig's tail; or, in familiar phrase, that he shall not lose his pearl without—as the vulgar hath it—having a squeak for it!

Now, my lord, hold me not guilty, of any unseemly parallels. It is true, in the following Letters you will, I know, meet with as many pearls as you ordinarily see at a royal drawing-room: nevertheless do not for an instant believe that I libel you as a hog. No, my lord, repress, annihilate the nascent thought. Yet, consider, that as this Dedication, like a patent iron coffin, is expressly hammered out to last until doom's-day—consider, my lord, how many chamberlains, and how various their capacities, may exist between this time and the world's end! It is to meet all possible accidents that may occur to all future Lords Chamberlain, that I here insist on dwelling upon the obligation I have laid them under, by dedicating to them these adamantine Letters.

Having resolved to publish, I looked serenely round the world for a nominal patron. At first I thought the Lord Chancellor, as legal guardian of the defenceless rich—for there is not one of these Letters that may not be considered as the orphan inheritor of invaluable wealth, that is, if wisdom always went as at the trunkmaker's, by avoirdupois weight.—yes, I thought the genius of the woolstack might fitly protect these costly epistles; but reflecting upon the many orphans, the many lunatics, too, still upon his lordship's hands, I instantly resolved not to swell the number of his responsibilities, and, therefore, thought again.

Next, the rattle of the Prince of Wales fell upon my ear. "These Letters," said I, "shall be dedicated to the Prince: they will especially serve to commemorate the day on which his Royal Highness was taken out of long frocks—the brevity of every epistle will touchingly illustrate the shortness of his coats." My

wife exulted at the idea. "The very thing," said she; "for, isn't there our last boy, Ugolino? he'll want something as he grows up; and the Prince can't do less than make him a tide-waiter." The mercenary speculation—for all women are not mothers of Gracchi—determined me to give up the Prince of Wales. "No," said I, "the dirty motive-makers of the world will be sure to misconstrue the act; they will swear that PUNCH was only loyal that he might be prosperous; they will say that he only worshipped the rising pap-spoon that his own brat might catch the fragments that fell from it." My heart swelled at the suspicion, like a new-blown bladder, and I struck off from my list the Prince of Wales.

I next looked into the Houses of Parliament. Here, I thought, are people whom the world sometimes persist in taking for my blood relations; and, it must be confessed, that both in the Upper and Lower Senate words are spoken and capers cut, that—were I to be impeached for either—it would, I fear, be very difficult for me to prove an *alibi*. "Why, there's fifty of 'em, at least," said my wife, "that you can't persuade the world ar'n't your own kith and kin." "And for that reason, wife," I replied, "I will have none of 'em. No; I am fully aware of the relationship myself; but it's their dirty pride that chokes me—their arrogance that makes them sometimes pass me, even in Parliament-street, as if I was to them an alien in blood, in manners, and religion. And why? I get my living in the open air. Well; didn't Julius Cæsar, the Duke of Marlborough, do the same? And when Wellington and Wagstaff were on service, didn't they labour, too, *sub dio*? Can you gather laurels in a back parlour—can you grow bays upon a hearth-rug?"

It was then, my lord, I resolved to dedicate these Letters to you. The reason is obvious:—

THE LORD CHAMBERLAIN NEVER DID ANYTHING FOR
PUNCH!

You have graciously let me alone; and I have flourished under the benignity of your neglect. I pitch my stage where-soever I will, in Westminster or not, without your warrant: I act my plays without your license. I discourse upon the world as it is, on the life that is moving about us, and on the invisible emotions of the heart of man, and pay no penny to your deputy. I increase in social importance; for I am not withered by your patronage.

Had fate made me, for these last two hundred years, the master of a play-house, how different might have been my condition! Had I, since the Act which made you protector and censor of the dramatic sisters, Melpomene and Thalia—poor girls! there are people who swear you have treated 'em worse than Mrs. Brownrigg used her apprentices—had I felt your patronage, how often had I been *banco rotto*; how often had I played—understand me, not paid—a “doleful dump” in Portugal-street!

Wherefore, then, do I dedicate to you these Letters?—From an exalted spirit of independence. I owe you nothing, my lord, and have flourished upon the obligation.

PUNCH.

INTRODUCTION.

IN humane compliance with the incessant and affecting supplication of many hundred bosom friends, these epistles are for the first time submitted to print. Yes, I swear it: and to solemnise the oath, I am ready to kiss a bank-note of any amount above fifty pounds,—I am wholly won to type by the entreaties of sundry fathers, for whose children I have—as, indeed, I feel I ought to have—yearnings of peculiar affection.

These letters were originally addressed to, I verily believe, my own son. In them, I have endeavoured to enshrine the wisdom of my life. In them, I have sought to paint men as they are—to sketch the scenes of the world as they have presented themselves to my observation—to show the spring of human motives—to exhibit to the opening mind of youth the vulgar wires that, because unseen, make a mystery of common-place.

I am prepared to be much abused for these epistles. They are written in lemon-juice. Nay, the little sacs in the jaws of the rattle-snake, wherein the reptile elaborates its poison to strike with sudden death the beautiful and harmless guinea-pigs and coneys of the earth,—these venomous bags have supplied the quill that traced the mortal sentences. Or if it be not really so, it is no matter; the worthy, amiable souls, who would have even a Sawney Bean painted upon a rose-leaf, will say as much; so let me for once be beforehand, and say it for them.

The child for whose instruction and guidance through life these letters were especially composed, has passed from this valley of shadows—he is dead. Death, in its various modes of approach, is an accordant mystery with the mystery of life. To one man it comes in the guise of a grape-stone—to another in the aspect of a jackass eating figs. To my dear son death appeared in the tempting shape of a fine South-down wether. Yes, mutton was his fate.

Had it pleased fortune to make me a man of bank-paper, the life of my darling child might have been spared. Then had I

shown that the dear boy acted only in obedience to an irresistible impulse born with him—strengthened by maternal milk—made invincible by oft indulgence. Then had I proved that the child in what he did was but the innocent accessory of his unconscious mother.

I have dried my eyes and will endeavour to explain myself.

Three months, to a day, before the birth of my child, we had not for the previous eight-and-forty hours rejoiced our loyalty with the sight of his majesty's head even upon copper; and yet—be Mercury my judge!—we worked most gallantly—handed round the hat most perseveringly—laughed most jocosely,—and all with bleeding hearts and a slow fire burning in our bowels. Nathless, halfpence came not. At that time, I remember, we were terribly run upon by Parliament. The madness of politics took away the people's brains; and literature, and art, and Punch, while the mania lasted, were—strange infatuation of men!—neglected for the House of Commons.

Four-and-twenty times in four-and-twenty streets had we acted that day, and yet no coin fell in the oft-presented hat. With thoughts of an empty garret, a supperless destiny if money came not—of my unrepining, much-enduring wife—of all her wants in that her time of weakness,—with all these horrid memories blazing in my brain, I rattled away, and laughed, and cried and crowed *roo-tooit-roo-tooit* in every key and cadence, and heard myself bruited by the mob as a merciless, unfeeling rascal, without one touch of humanity for aught that breathed. Alas! at that moment I had an ulcer in my heart big as a rat-hole.

Evening came on, and with it cold and drizzling rain. We were preparing for our twenty-fifth representation, when a delicious odour suddenly steamed through the canvas, and on the instant, a voice—to my foolish ear sweet as the multitudinous voices of cherubim—cried—

"Hot, hot—all hot—mutton pies all hot!"

My dear wife placed her hand upon her heart—she knew I had not a penny—softly sighed, then fell in a dead swoon into my arms. There she lay, and still the retreating voice rang through the night—

"Hot, hot—all hot—mutton pies, all hot!"

At length my spouse returned to life. With the fine delicacy, the mighty self denial of her sex, she breathed not her wish. But I looked in her eyes, and read—*Mutton pies—all hot—hot, hot!*

And who, after this, can wonder at—much more blame—my darling, blighted son for his uncontrollable affection for South-down, or in fact any other, wethers?

Oh, ye thousands of philosophers, dozing, dreaming, yawning

in garrets—oh, ye broad-brimmed, long-skirted, ankle-jacked sages, who look into men's skulls as men look into glass hives—who untwist the cords of the human heart carefully yet surely as the huswife untangles a skein of silk—could not twelve of ye be found to go into a box to discuss, and by your verdict dignify, as pretty a case of morals and metaphysics as ever came from the Press-yard? But no; drysalters, hardwaremen, yea, ropemakers (for my innocent boy never thought to challenge the last jurymen as peculiarly interested in the verdict), judged him, and of course he was lost.

As a further illustration of the benighted intellect of the jury, it was argued against my boy—my doomed one from the womb!—that he had on a previous occasion shown a violent love for a bale of Welsh flannel, the property of a hosier on Ludgate-hill. Of course, he had. It was the inevitable result of his constitution. The flannel was part of the sheep. What he did, he did from necessity. He was organised for the act. The jury—asses!—called it a second offence. Why, it was one and the same thing. Nay, had my child made off with a gross or two of lamb's-wool socks, and half-a-dozen Witney blankets, a philosophic jury would have considered the collective acts as but an individual emanation of pre-organised temperament; and, pitying the mother in the snare, have returned a triumphant acquittal. But what knew the jury of affinities?

Had I been rich I could have proved all this, and my boy had been saved upon a constitutional eccentricity. As it was—but I will no longer dwell upon the theme. Enough for the curious. My boy's fate may be found in the archives of Seven Dials.

These letters will, I trust, testify my paternal solicitude. It is my pride, that they were treasured by my son, and were bequeathed by him, with other effects, to the individual whose adroit attention to my boy in his last moments was witnessed by hundreds, and commented upon in the handsomest way by various distinguished writers of the English press. It is to the liberality of this individual I am indebted for the original documents; for, elevated far above the petty spirit of huckstering, he at a word took a pot of porter for the treasure, and with a significant wink and a light-hearted laugh, wished me joy of my bargain

LETTER I.

THE BRIGHT POKER.

MY DEAR LITTLE BOY,—So early as cock-crow this morning, your dear mother reminded me that you were this day nine years old. The intelligence delighted, yea, and saddened me. My sweet little pet, you will think this strange : I will explain myself. When I remembered that I was the author of a rational being, of a creature destined, it might be, to have a great stake in this world, and a still greater in the next, my heart rose within me, and I was in a transport of happiness. When, again, I reflected that I had given to the earth an intelligent animal, doomed, perhaps, to continual fisticuffs with fortune ; marked, branded with poverty ; sentenced to all the varieties of the elements ; a cold, hungry, houseless, haggard, squalid piece of human offal ; a thing with the hopes and aspirations of man, now hardened by the injustice of the world to callous, calculating insensibility, now stung into the activity of craft ;—when I saw you ragged and despairing, an outcast in this life, and hopeless for—but then I banished the picture from my brain. “Things,” I thus communed with myself, “must not be thought of after this melancholy fashion ; otherwise little boys will become extinct.”

You are now, however, called upon to remember—for you are sufficiently old to understand the obligation, and I shall therefore no longer address you as a mere child—that to me you owe your life. It is now nine years (metaphysicians would say something more,) since you opened a debtor account with me : an account never to be payed off by laying down the principal, but to be duly acknowledged by the punctual payment of interest in the shape of love, duty, and obedience. Understand, you owe me your life : whether you were, or were not, a party to the debt at the time it was contracted—whether at my own whim and caprice I fixed upon you an obligation, never in reality thinking of you at all, matters not: you are my debtor, up to the present period, for nine springs, as many summers, the like number of autumns, and not one less winter. Consider the hold I have upon you—remember the debt that will be every year increasing, and be docile, be obedient.

It is related of St. Francis that, being destitute of children, he made to himself a family of snow-balls; and, that, when made, he gave to them pretty and endearing names, and took them in his arms, and hugged them to his bosom, and doubtless thought himself quite a family man. Now, my dear child, I am not a St. Francis—(though I think I have at least patrons under other names in the Calendar,)—and am therefore incapable of begetting a snow-ball for my heir; but shall I feel less for my own flesh and blood than the first of the grey coats cared for congealed water?

My affection, then, speaks for you in this, and shall be audible in many, letters. The world is opening upon you. In a few years you will enter upon that fearful struggle for the daily shoulder of mutton—that terrible fight which every day shakes the earth to its foundations—that never-ceasing squabble which, when Jove is melancholy—for who shall say that Jove himself has not his megrims?—makes laughter for his majesty and his court assembled. How, then, to get the best of the fray—how to secure the best cut of the shoulder? My son, give heed to a short story.

The widow Muggeridge was the cleanliest of huswives. You might, in vulgar phrase, have eaten your dinner off her floor; the more especially as plates for two were never known upon her table. Her household gods were a scrubbing-brush and scouring paper. She fairly washed the world from under the feet of her husband. She insisted, as she worded it, upon his being nice and comfortable; and therefore plentifully sluicing the sick man's chamber, as he lay, knocked down by a fever, Muggeridge died of cold water and a clean helpmate. When assured of her husband's death, it was the touching regret of the new-made widow that he had not staid to change his shirt. If any man ever took pleasure in his grave, it must have been Muggeridge; for never since his marriage had he known what it was to enjoy a piece of wholesome dirt.

- And here, my dear child, let me advise you, if it should be your destiny to wed, and live in humble state, to avoid by all means what is called a clean wife. You will be made to endure the extreme of misery, under the base, the invidious pretext of being rendered comfortable. Your house will be an ark tossed by continual floods. You will never know what it is to properly accommodate your shoulders to a shirt, so brief will be its visit to your back ere it again go to the wash-tub. And then for spiders, fleas, and other household insects, sent especially into our homesteads to awaken the inquiring spirit of man, to at

once humble his individual pride by the contemplation of their sagacity, and to elevate him by the frequent evidence of the marvels of animal life,—all these calls upon your higher faculties will be wanting; and, lacking them, your immortal part will be dizzied, stunned, by the monotony of the scrubbing-brush, and poisoned, past the remedy of perfume, by yellow soap. Your wife and children, too, will have their faces continually shining like the holiday saucers on the mantel-piece. Now, consider the conceit, the worse than arrogance of this: the studied callous forgetfulness of the beginning of man. Did he not spring from the earth?—from clay—dirt—mould—mud—garden soil, or compost of some sort; for theological geology (you must look into the dictionary for these words) has not precisely defined what; and is it not, he basest impudence of pride to seek to wash and scrub and rub away the original spot? Is he not the most natural man who, in vulgar meaning, is the dirtiest? Depend upon it, there is a fine natural religion in dirt: and yet we see men and women strive to appear as if they were compounded of the roses and lilies of Paradise, instead of the fine rich loam that fed their roots. Be assured of it, there is great piety in what the ignorant foolishly call filth. Take some of the saints for an example. Off with their coats, and away with their hair-shirts; and even then, my son, so intently have they considered, and been influenced by the lowly origin of man, that with the most curious eye, and most delicate finger, you shall not be able to tell where either saint or dirt begins or ends.

I have, however, been led from my promised narrative.

The widow Muggeridge, in her best room, had two pokers. The one was black and somewhat bent: the other shone like a ray of summer light—it was effulgent, speckless steel.

Both pokers stood at the same fire-place. "What!" you ask, "and did the widow Muggeridge stir her fire with both?" Certainly not. Was a coal to be cracked—the black poker cracked it; was the lower bar to be cleared—the black poker cleared it; did she want a rousing fire—the black poker was plunged relentlessly into the burning mass, to stir up the sleeping heart of Vulcan; was a tea-kettle to be accommodated to the coals—the black poker supported it. "And what," methinks you ask, "did the bright poker?" I answer nothing—nothing save to stand and glisten at the fire-side; its black, begrimed companion, stoking, roking, burning, banging, doing all the sweating work. As for the bright poker, that was a consecrated thing. Never did Mrs. Muggeridge go to Hackney for a week to visit her relations, that the bright poker was not removed from the grate; and, carefully swathed in oiled flannel, awaited

in greasy repose the return of its mistress. Then, once more in glistening idleness, would it lounge among shovel and tongs ; the jetty slave, the black poker, working until it was worked to the stump, at last to be flung aside for vile old iron ! One dozen black pokers did the bright poker see out ; and to this day—doing nothing—it stands lustrous and inactive !

My son, such is life. When you enter the world, make up all your energies to become—A Bright Poker.

LETTER II.

WORDS AND THEIR COUNTERFEITS—HOW TO RECEIVE AND PASS OFF THE SAME, WITH OTHER USEFUL COUNSEL.

MY DEAR BOY—I am much pleased with your last letter. Your remarks on the copies set you by your excellent master, Dr. Birchbud, convince me that schooling has not been lost upon you. However, beware lest you look too closely into the significance and meaning of words. This is an unprofitable custom, and has spoilt the fortunes of many a man. You may have observed a team of horses yoked to a heavy waggon ; may have heard the bells hanging about their head-gear tinkle, tinkle, tinkle. The bells are of no use—none, save to keep up a monotonous jingle ; although, doubtless, Giles the waggoner will assure you that the music cheers the horses on the dusty road, and, under the burning sun, makes them pull blithely and all together. Now, there is a certain lot of sentences in use among men, precisely like these bells. They mean nothing—are not intended to mean anything—but custom requires the jingle. Thus, when you meet a man whom you have seen, perhaps, thrice before—and he declares that “he is delighted to see you,” albeit it would give him no concern whatever if you were decorating the next gibbet—you must not, for a moment, look a doubt of his joy, but take his rapture as a thing of course. If he squeeze your hand until your knuckles crack—squeeze again. If he declare that “you’re looking the picture of health,” asseverate upon your honour that “he has the advantage of you, for you never saw him look better.” He may at the time be in the last stage of a consumption—you may have a hectic fever in your cheek ; no matter for that ; you have both jingled your bells, and with lightened consciences may take your separate way.

I could, my dear child, enlarge upon this subject. It is enough

that I caution you in your intercourse with the world, not to take words as so much genuine coin of standard metal, but merely as counters that people play with. If you estimate them at anything above this, you will be in the hapless condition of the wretch who takes so many gilt pocket-pieces for real Mint guineas: contempt and beggary will be your portion. Thinking yourself rich beyond the wealth of Abraham Newland in the golden promises of men, you will risk a kicking from the threshold of the first verbal friend whom you seek for small change.

Your last copy, you tell me, was—

“Command you may your mind from play.”

You object to this as an unreasonable dogma. You say, you cannot command your mind from play; and insinuate it to be an impertinence of your master to assume any such likelihood on your part. In fact, you deny it *in toto*. More than this; you had the hardihood to contest the propriety of the text with your worthy master, who, you further inform me, appealed to your moral sense through your fleshly tabernacle, and—for some minutes—left you not a leg to stand upon.

I cannot, my dear boy, regret this last incident. It will, I hope, impress upon your mind the necessity of taking certain sentences current in the world for precisely what they are worth, without hallooing and calling a crowd about you to show their cracked and counterfeit condition. Dr. Birchbud, when a boy, had written—

“Command you may your mind from play,”

a hundred and a hundred times in fine large text. Well, did he believe in the saw any more for that? Did he, think you, expect you to believe in it? “Then, wherefore”—you may ask in your ignorance—“did he scourge me, for not believing?” Foolish boy! it was for not seeming to believe. This is precisely the treatment you will meet with in the world, if, with courageous conceit, you attempt to test the alloy in so much of its verbal coinage—coinage that is worn thin with handling; which wise men know the true value of, and pocket for what it's worth, and which only fools (and the worst of fools they call martyrs) ring, and rub, and look at, and having done so, screech out,—“Bad money!”

Now, my dear boy, the next time the worthy Doctor Birchbud gives you the copy—

“Command you may your mind from play,”

look at it with sudden reverence, square your elbow with deter-

mined energy, take up your pen as though you were about to book the text "in the red-leaved tablet of your heart,"—and having, in solemn silence, made the required number of copies, take the book up to your master,—and, as you give it in, let your countenance appear at once informed and dignified with the beautiful truth you have consigned to paper,—nay, let your whole anatomy seem at that moment absorbing the grand lesson you have inscribed in the copy-book. This done, you may return to your seat, and—whenever the master's head is turned aside—you may go on with your game of "odd or even" under the desk with Jack Rogers, play at "soldiers" on your slate, or any other pastime that may take your fancy. It is sufficient that you have gravely registered your belief, that—

"Command you may your mind from play."

The registration is enough ; whether you can, or will, is altogether another matter.

This subject reminds me of an inquiry you once made, at a time when you were too young to comprehend the matter. On the paper covering a square of Windsor soap were printed the Royal Arms. I recollect your charming smile at the lion and unicorn ; and the childish curiosity which prompted you to inquire the meaning of the royal legend—

" Dieu et mon droit."

That, my child, it is now proper for you to learn, means, "God and my right." When you shall have mastered something more of the History of England, and shall have read all that certain kings have done under that motto, you will then more fully understand what I have written to you upon taking words as counters, not as real things ; of the necessity of always seeming to believe them the true coin, and the danger of crying counterfeit. "God and my right !" Ha, my dear boy, there have been men, who because they would stand out from the rest of the world, and would not believe in the divine origin of these syllables, have had their heads sliced like turnips from their shoulders, and their quarters hung up like sides of bacon over city gates ; whilst other men, not one jot more believing, have, with a knowing wink at their fellows, and thrusting their tongues in their cheeks, bowed like willow wands to the words, and found their reward in beef, ale, and, in fulness of years, death in a goose-bed.

You say you employed the last half-holiday in birds'-nesting. This was very right. I would have you train your mind to

manly sports. In due season, with the grace of fortune, you will be able to hunt hares, those pestilent and dangerous creatures having been especially provided to exercise the muscles and the intellects of man. Should you obtain that position in the world, which it is my fervent prayer you will arrive at, you may also be permitted to join in a royal hunt, a pastime of the highest dignity, utility, and humanity. For instance, you will chase a stag, for the express and only purpose of terrifying it; and having put it to an hour or two of serviceable agony, you will have it caught and conducted back to the pasture, to be left for future enjoyment. As, however, these must be the sports of your manhood, you are quite right now to begin with linnets and sparrows. You, my dear son, will one day have to quit the paternal roof for the great world. By reflecting on what the parent linnets and sparrows suffer, deprived of their young, you will have some wholesome idea of the anxiety of your loving parents under a like affliction.

You ask me to send you some corking-pins that you may spin cockchafers upon them. Your mother sends them, with her blessing and her best love. I trust, however, you will turn this amusement to your profit. As, under the blessing of heaven, I may probably article you to Mr. Abednego, the attorney and money-lender of Jewish prejudice, I would counsel you to take particular notice of the conduct of the cockchafer, when buzzing and spinning with the pin through its bowels—that you may know exactly how long it will live, and how much pin it will bear. This knowledge, for wisdom comes to us from so many channels, will be of great use to you as a disciple of Abednego, when making out your costs.

LETTER III.

OBJECTS WORTHY OF DISCOVERY—SHORT STORY OF MAN AND HIS DUCK.

MY DEAR BOY,—You tell me you have been reading *Captain Cook's Voyages*, and are so much pleased with them, that you would start round the world on a voyage of discovery to-morrow morning. You will seriously offend me by any repetition of this folly. Leave such mad adventures to fools and zealots. Stay you, and make greater discoveries, at home.

Do you know the reward of the simpletons who peril life, and

forego all the comforts of the fleshly man—for what? To give, it may be, their name to an iceberg, and their carcasses to the sharks. Columbus discovered America, and was at last rewarded with fetters for his pains. Who can point out the two yards of dust that cover Cabot the mariner, who found a home and a retreat for tens of thousands? Ask of the sea, in which of its multitudinous caves repose the bones of Hudson?

The known world is quite large enough for you; let fools, if they will, leave their snug arm-chairs, and sea-coal fires, to extend its boundaries. What matters it to you where the Niger begins or ends? Have you not the pleasant banks of Thames, the tens of thousands of unsophisticated natives thronging its shores; all of them ready to exchange their gold-dust for any glass-beads you may bring for barter, if, by your confidence and swagger, you can pass off the glass for veritable diamonds? If you can, great and sufficient will be your reward. If you cannot, you will undergo the rightful penalty of your ignorance. But the thing is done every day. Do not imagine they are the only savages whose skins are soot-colour, who wear rings through their noses, stick parrots' feathers in their woolly hair, and bow to Mumbo Jumbo as their only deity. My dear boy, you will find amongst the whitest, the most carefully-dressed, and most pious of London, absolute children of nature; men, as it would seem, expressly made for the support of their fellow-creatures, as shoals of herrings are every season spawned expressly for the nutriment of whales. Therefore, trust yourself to no canoe on the Senegal, but prosper on the banks of your paternal river.

You would like to be a discoverer? Very well. London is a boundless region for the exercise of the greatest sagacity. Leave to dreamers the solution of the shortest cut to India—find you the north-west passage to the pockets of your fellow-creatures. Discover the weaknesses of men; they will be to you more than the mines of Potosi, bring you richer merchandise than cargoes of gold-dust and ivory.

If, however, forgetful of my paternal lessons and unworthy of your progenitor, you address yourself solely to what is absurdly termed the dignity of human nature and the amelioration of the condition of mankind,—if you choose to make one of the fools who have lost their labour and their soap in the vain attempt to wash the negro white,—why, starvation, obloquy, and wretchedness in every shape attend you! Your heart's blood may dry up in a garret, and—if your carcass be not arrested by the bailiff—you may rot in the pauper's corner of the parish church-yard. To be sure, after some hundred years or so, it may be some comfort for your ghost to slip from your forgotten grave, and

make midnight visits to the statue that may be at length erected to the genius that died, the debtor of a twopenny loaf to a benevolent baker. If you will be contented with such reward, try of course to elevate your species. If, however, you would rather enjoy present sixpences, why then spin pewter plates on a balanced sword, or poise a donkey. My dear boy, work for ready money. Take no bill upon posterity: in the first place, there are many chances against its being paid; and in the next, if it be duly honoured, the cash may be laid out on some piece of bronze or marble of not the slightest value to the original. Sure I am, that no statue or monument is erected to the memory of one who is at length called the benefactor of his race, that the ceremony is not a holiday for famine and all the household furies. They behold in the thing an irresistible temptation to other fools. One late-rewarded martyr inevitably raises a new regiment to bleed and suffer.

It is upon this truth—for truth is not always to be disregarded—that I would have you stand: it is upon this principle I would have you eschew all romantic notions of travels to Abyssinia, and voyages to the Pole, for the more profitable discovery of the weaknesses of your fellow-creatures. Are you fond of wild countries, curious plants, rare animals, strange adventures? Plunge into the heart of man. There you will find deserts, poisonous weeds, snakes, and a host of iniquities arrayed against a host. You will also find streams gushing with health, amaranthine flowers, cooing doves, and things of divine aspect and heavenly utterance: with these, however, meddle not. No; turn from them, and, spite of yourself, convince yourself that they exist not, that they are the mere phantasma of the brain—the mere offspring of the imagination, that, sickened with arid, burning tracts, sees in its sweet disease palms and silver springs, and in the tinkling of the camel's bell hears the heart-delighting nightingale. Not so with the dreary places and the venomous things. Learn every nook of these; catalogue every object. It is in such spots you are to drive a prosperous trade; it is such articles you are to use in barter. Does not the wise tradesman put on his comeliest looks, and bow lowest to his best customer? Virtue is a poor, paltry creature, buying her miserable penn'orths at miserable chandlers'. Now Vice, Weakness, and Co., are large, burly traders, and "come smug upon the mart." Therefore, make yourself master of their tempers—find your way to their hearts; for they have hearts, even as blocks of marble sometimes contain within them the torpid, sweating toad, "ugly and venomous."

However, in opening an account with this firm, be sure you

never apply to them the names spat upon them by clean-mouthed Virtue. Oh, no! although you know them to be leprous to the bones, you must treat them, must speak of them, as though they were the very incarnation of health. Though their corrupt practices are to the nostril like the foulness of a new battle-field, snuff them as though you inhaled the odours of myrrh and frankincense burning in the temple.

When you have become a scholar in the weaknesses of the human heart, you may then lay them under what impost you will. You may—but I will tell you a little story in illustration of the truth of this.

You must know that the greater number of the inhabitants of Ceylon have it, as their firm belief, that, when dead, their souls will take up their habitation in the bodies of various animals. A wise fellow—too wise to work, and sage enough to be determined to enjoy himself without labour—turned the superstition of his neighbours to constant profit. Whenever his pockets were empty he would rush into the streets, and carrying a live duck in one hand, and brandishing a knife with the other, he would exclaim to the terrified people—

“Wretches, this duck may be your grandfather—your grandmother—your father—your mother—your brother—your sister—your son—your daughter! Wretches! I’ll kill the duck!”

Whereupon, men, women, and children would throw themselves upon their knees, and offering what money they had, beg of the man not to kill their grandfather, their grandmother, their son, their daughter, but in the depths of his mercy, and for the sake of ready money, to touch not a feather of the duck!

And the man, pocketing the cash, would walk away, for that time sparing the duck.

My son, you are not an inhabitant of Ceylon, but a denizen of enlightened London; nevertheless, in every city every man has some sort of a grandmother in some sort of a duck.

LETTER IV.

ON THE CHOICE OF A PROFESSION.

MY DEAR CHILD,—You say you are anxious to select for yourself an agreeable and profitable profession, and solicit my paternal counsel to assist you in your choice. This brings to my recollection, that your darling mother once begged that I would accompany her to a mercer's, to choose a gown. We entered the shop, and desired an inspection of the warehouseman's commodities. Velvets—cut, flowered, and plain; satins of all colours; sarsnets; silks, shot with thunder and lightning; muslins, poplins, bombazeens, pompadours; all the beautiful products of the loom were graciously taken from the shelves, and displayed upon the counter before us. Some two to three hours were agreeably passed in this way; when your dear mother, with one of her sweetest smiles, thanked the shopmen for their trouble, then said, "she thought she could only afford a tenpenny gingham."

My dear boy,—I fear it will be thus with you in your choice of a profession. I may, it is true, unroll an archbishop's lawn before you—may call your earnest attention to a Lord Chancellor's ermine—may request you to feel the weighty bullion of a commander-in-chief's epaulets—to weigh in your hand the gold-headed cane of a court physician,—and when all this is done, you may be compelled to call for the leather apron of a cobbler, or the goose and needle of a tailor.

I wish—and Heaven witness the aspiration—that at your birth the law of primogeniture had bound you apprentice to 15,000*l.* per annum, besides my good-will, when I slept beneath a slab of marble. Such a calling must be a very pretty business, and, believe me, I should have mightily liked to be your master. As fortune has ordered it otherwise, let us look at the professions.

Will you enter the church? Alas! what a prospect lies before you. Can you discipline your mind and body to fulfil the functions of your office? I will at once suppose you a bishop. Can you, I ask it, satisfy your appetite with merely locusts and wild honey? Will you be content with raiment of sack-cloth, or at the best, linsey-woolsey; and can you answer for your conscience that you will, at all times and in all weathers, be ready to make a pilgrimage to the hovels of the poor: to give

comfort to the wretched ; to pray beside the straw of the repentant guilty ; to show, by your own contempt of the creature blessings of this world, that you look upon the earth as a mere temporary tarrying-place, — a caravanserai, where you are awaiting until called beyond the clouds ? Consider it ; as a bishop, you will be expected to take your seat in the House of Lords. When there, shall you be prepared, with the rest of your brethren, to set a continual pattern of piety and self-denial to the lay-nobles ? Will you be ever prompt—as bishops always are—to plead the cause of the wretched ; to stand between the sinking poor and the arrogant rich ; and with a voice of almost divine thunder, wake in the callous hearts of worldlings a slumbering conscience for their fellow-men ? Will you be in the House of Lords, a lump of episcopal camphor—a bundle of spikenard—a pot of honey ? Can you—as all bishops always do—abstain from the lusts of Mammon, and keep your lawn, white and candid as the wings of angels, from the yellow soil of filthy Plutus ? Thinking only of the broadest, the shortest, and the best way to heaven,—will you (like all bishops) never meddle with turnpike acts, or job with wooden pavements ? Eschewing the vanity of coach and footman (as John the Baptist did, and all bishops do,) will you think only of the carriage of Elisha ; and turning from the pomps and vanities of an episcopal palace, can you (as all bishops do) feed humbly, lodge lowly,—hungering only for immortal manna,—waiting only to be called to that home—

“ Whose glory is the light of setting suns.”

My dear boy, examine yourself, and say, are you equal to all this ? I think you are my own flesh and blood, and thinking so, doubt your constancy in this matter. Hence, I would advise you to eschew the church ; for unless you could live a life apostolical, as all bishops always do, what disgrace would you bring upon the bench—what slander and a by-word would you be in the mouths of the heathen !

Let us now consider the law, and suppose you called to the bar. Have you the fortune to support your dignity ?—Have you, for this is more, that gentleness of spirit, that philanthropy of soul, which would make all men brothers, which would pluck from the hearts of your fellow-creatures, malice and dissent, the foul hemlock and nightshade that poison the sweet sources of human love ? Consider the change that has come upon the law and its guileless professors. There was, indeed, a golden time, when you might have amassed a fortune by playing bo-peep with Truth ; by abusing, reviling her ; by showing her virgin innocence

to be strumpet infamy ; by plucking every pinion from her sky-cleaving wing, and making her a wretch of sordid earth : by causing Truth herself to blush for her nakedness.—More, you might have successfully “moved the court” to punish her for the indecent exposure ; and thus Truth, by the potency of your eloquence, might have been handed over to the scourging arm of the beadle, whilst Falsehood, your successful client, should have gone triumphant home, in a carriage-and-four, with white favours. These golden times are past. Then, you might have walked the Hall, gowned and wigged, with a harlot tongue to let for hire, carrying any suit into court, as a porter carries any load ; then at the Old Bailey you might even have shaken hands with avowed murder in his cell, and fresh from the blood-shot eye, and charnel breath of homicide, have called Heaven, and its angels, to bear witness to the purity of the cut-throat who had paid you so many golden pieces for your exordium, your metaphors, your peroration ; your spattering of witnesses, your fierce knocking at the startled hearts of half-bewildered jurymen ; threatening the trembling twelve with midnight visits from the ghost of the innocent creature in the dock, if the verdict went for hemp. This you *might* have done, but this is past. Now, Conscience wigs itself, and sits with open door, giving advice gratis. Therefore, can you afford it in purse ? And more ; have you the necessary milkiness of humanity—for such is the term simpletons give it—to play the peace-maker between man and man, giving advice, allaying feuds, reconciling neighbour to neighbour, weighing out justice in her golden scales, and charging not one maravedi for the trouble ? Can you, as barrister, write over your door—as may now be seen in thousands of places,—“*Advice given against going to law, gratis ?*”

In the olden time, I should have advised you to make an effort for the bar ; but with the present romantic notions—for I can give them no worthier name—operating on the profession, you can afford it neither in pocket nor in spirit. To such an extent have barristers carried their peace-making quixotisms (of course, considerably assisted by their worthier brethren, the attorneys), that the judges have nothing to do. Already the moth is eating up the official ermine !

Will you be a soldier ? Well, I will presume you are a Field-Marshal. A war breaks out : a wicked, unjust war. It may be thought necessary (such a case occurred about a century ago, and may occur again,) to cut the throats of a few thousands of Chinese, for no other reason than that the Celestial Emperor hath, with his “vermilion pencil,” written an edict against the

swallowing of British opium. You are ordered for the Chinese waters, to blow up, burn, slay, sink—in a word, to commit all the beautiful varieties of mischief invented by the devil's toy-woman, Madame Bellona. Well, with the spirit that is now growing in the army—a spirit that has lately developed itself in so many bright examples—you are compelled to throw up in "sublime disgust," your Marshal's baton, and, like Cincinnatus, retire to Battersea to cultivate cress and mustard; philosophically preferring those pungent vegetables to laurels stained with the blood of the innocent, defiled with the tears of the orphan. You may then send your epaulettes to Holywell-street, to be burnt for the gold—or sell your uniform to be used, on masquerade nights, at the Lowther Arcade. My dear boy, military glory is not what it used to be. Once people thought it a jewel—a solid ruby. But philosophy has touched what seemed a gem, and has proved it to be only congealed blood.

No, you shall be neither Bishop, Chancellor, nor Generalissimo; but, my boy, you shall be—

But that I'll tell you in my next.

LETTER V.

THE ADVANTAGES OF BEING "NOTHING."

IN my last, my dear boy, I promised to advise you on the choice of a profession. I hasten to redeem that promise. Then I say to you, strive to be neither bishop, chancellor, generalissimo, nor court physician; but, my beloved child,—be Nothing.

By not trammelling your mind with the subtleties of divinity or law—by maintaining a perfect freedom from the prejudices of a military or medical life,—you will be able to take a more dispassionate view of the world about you; will be the more ready to accommodate yourself to any profitable circumstance that may present itself. Consider how many curates who devote their lives to divinity shiver in a brown-black coat; fight a daily fight with the meanest necessities; and with wife, and it may be half-a-dozen children ill-clothed and ill-fed at home, are paid forty pounds a-year to be pattern pieces of holiness and benevolence to all the country round. The clerk, who to his Sunday duties, unites the profitable trade of soleing and heeling dilapidated shoes, is a nabob; the clerk is not cursed with the brand of a gentleman; he may ply with wax-end and awl—may vend

soap, brick-dust, and candles—run of errands, beat carpets,—do any servile work to make up his income; *his* Sabbath “amen” being in no way vulgarised by the labour of the week. But the curate—alas, poor man!—he has been to college, and is a gentleman. Thus, by virtue of his gentility, he must be content with beggary, nor soil his orthodox hands with vulgar task-work. He must be satisfied with daily bread in its very literalness, nor dare to hope the luxury of butter. You are not my own flesh and blood, if you would stand this.

Next for the law. I should have no objection to your being called to the bar, as a sort of genteel thing. A wig and gown may often prove a tolerable bait for decently endowed heiresses. They give you the nominal standing of a gentleman, under which character you may make various practical speculations on the innocence of mankind; but for living upon your business, you might as soon hope to make a daily dinner on the flag-stones of Pump-court. Consider, my son, what a thing is a briefless barrister! A cockatrice, that cannot lay eggs—a spider, without an inch of web!

I have no vote for any borough or county; and though in my time I have served multitudes of politicians with votes when in and out of office, there is not one of them who has the gratitude to own the obligation. Hence, what will be your fate if you go into the army? I might—with assistance from a few loan societies—be able to purchase you a pair of colours; but as neither myself nor your mother have any interest with anybody at the Horse Guards, what would be your fate, if unhappily alive, at seventy? Why, still the pair of colours; and, if you have served long in India, a face of orange-peel, and a piece of liver no bigger than your thumb. Glory, my boy, is a beautiful thing in the Battle of Waterloo at Astley's; and there, if you have military yearnings, take your shilling's-worth of it.

As for medicine, if you set up in what is called an honourable manner, to kill by diploma,—you will find the game so beaten and hunted, that 'tis ten to one you bag a patient once a twelvemonth. If, indeed, fortified by your own unauthorised opinion,—you can persuade people into patent remedies against disease and death, disarming the destroyer by a learned name attached to bread-pills or coloured Thames water,—take my blessing, and straightway—having entered into a sleeping partnership with a confidential undertaker—found a College of Health. There is no such golden walk to fortune as through the bowels of the credulous; and when sick, all men are credulous. Pain is a great leveller, alike hurling down scepticism, philosophy, and mere prosaic common-sense. The man, who

before his friends will sneer at a vaunted specific, will sneak out by himself to seek the quack vendor of the despised anodyne : in the same way, that fine ladies who profess to laugh at astrology, will disguise themselves in old shawls and bonnets, and venture up dirty lanes and into foul garrets, to consult bed-ridden fortune-tellers on the whereabouts and when-coming of their future husbands. If you have any feeling for medicine, and have face and nerve to cry "Quack" lustily—away with you into the market-place, and begin. But if, with the unprofitable pride of science, you would only physic, bleed, and blister on the strength of a diploma, the boy who carries out your medicine shall be happier than his master, and—when he gets his wages—better paid.

Again, then, I say it, my son, be Nothing ! Look at the flourishing examples of Nothing about you ! Consider the men in this vast metropolis whose faces shine with the very marrow of the land, and all for doing and being Nothing ! Then, what ease—what unconcern—what perfect dignity in the profession ! Why, dull-brained, horn-handed labour, sweats and grows thin, and dies worn out, whilst Nothing gets a redder tinge upon its cheek, a thicker wattle to its chin, and a larger compass of abdomen. There are hundreds of the goodly profession of Nothing who have walked upon three-piled velvet from their nurses' arms to the grave : men who in the most triumphant manner vindicate the ingenuity of the human mind ; for enjoying and possessing every creature comfort of existence, not even a conjuror, nay, sometimes not even a police magistrate, can discover how they get it.

Consider man as Nothing, and what a glorious spectacle ! A man following an allowed, a known profession, is a vulgar object, let his in-comings be ever so great : we know his whole mystery—we can tell whence flows his tide of wealth. The Thames is a gorgeous river, but knowing its name, we talk little of its magnificence. 'Tis otherwise with the Niger. The man who with nothing, has all things, is to us a sort of Friar Bacon. We approach him with a feeling deeper than respect. He is the Cornelius Agrippa of our times. We know not that some familiar spirit does not act his bidding. He may, on the contrary, be a king's son by a left-handed marriage. He moves in a cloud of mystery—he is away, apart from the common. We know that if other men were to cease from their ordinary occupations, the whole train of human wants would immediately set in upon them ; whilst the man professing Nothing lives, independent, *tabooed*, from all the annoyances of life. Oh, my son ! I grant the secret may be difficult to compass ; but study

for it—search it out, though your brain become dry and rattle in your skull like a withered hazel-nut—still, once discover how to live with Nothing, and you may snap your fingers at all mortal accident. Nothing, when a successful Nothing, is the nabob of the world!

You will, in your progress through life, be called upon to wonder at the discoveries of Galileo, who swore that the world moved round the sun—and then, or I mistake, that the sun moved round the world; you will hear a great deal of Homer and Shakspeare, who shaped out worlds upon paper, and begot men and women with drops of ink: folks will talk to you upon the discovery of the circulation of the blood, and other gossip of the like sort, demanding your admiration, your homage, for what they will call the triumph of human genius. Fiddle-de-dee! What should you care how the world moves, or whether it move at all, so you move well in it? As for Homer and Shakspeare, the first was a beggar, and for the second—for the great magician, who as people will cant to you, has left immortal company for the spirit of man in its weary journey through this briary world—has bequeathed scenes of immortal loveliness for the human fancy to delight in—founts of eternal truth for the lip of man to drink, and drink—and for aye be renovated with every draught,—he, this benefactor to the world, could not secure a comfortable roof from the affections and gratitude of men, for the female descendant of his flesh, who withered from the world, almost an outcast and a pauper! Now, the man who can live a long and jovial life upon Nothing, has often (by some strange wizard craft) the wherewithal to bequeath to his heirs. As for literature and science,—tales of fairy-land, and the circulation of the blood,—be it your care to make nothing your Ariel; and for your blood, heed not how it passes through your heart, so that as it flow, it be enriched with the brightest and strengthened with the best.

Be a successful Nothing, my son, and be blessed!

LETTER VI.

PUNCH INTRODUCES HIS SON TO "HERMETICAL" PHILOSOPHY.

WHAT! my dear boy, my last letter has thrown you into a fit of melancholy? You look hopelessly, recklessly, on the prospects of human life, and would fain flee into a hermitage, there to ponder on the mysteries of social humbug—of life and death; the toils and the trifles of mankind? This resolution on your part reminded me that I was the fortunate possessor of a few fragmentary thoughts on the vast subjects you would contemplate—of thoughts born in solitude of a restless brain that has long since mingled with the earth. Take them—ponder on them—and for the present be content to know them as—

"FRAGMENTS ON HUMBUG, SOLITUDE, LIFE, DEATH, AND
SELF-KNOWLEDGE, BY THE HERMIT OF CONEY-HATCH."

I have thought it wise and pleasant in my solitude, having no ready-money market for my time, to devote my hours on hand to the intellectual wants of my fellow-man. The reader, affected by the beauty of my subject, may haply feel a generous curiosity, may yearn to know the condition of the sage who seeks to discourse upon the most vital, the most profound, the most mysterious principle of human society,—for such is humbug. It is the cement of the social fabric. It is the golden cord tying together, and making strong, the sticks and twigs of the world. It is the dulcet bell, whose ravishing sound calls the great family of man to eat, drink, and be merry! Hapless are they, whose leathern ears list not the music; for if they feed at all, at best they feed on draff, and are to the revellers even as swine are to bipeds.

Let not the reader seek to know more of me than, with a most white conscience, I am permitted to tell him. The great events of my life are not my own. I speak without any oracular quibble; I mean this, and no other. The great accidents of my mortal travail have been sold; yea, bartered by me for so many Mint medals, and a stamp receipt given for the payment. Thus it was. In a moment of pecuniary impatience, I offered a choice of the events of my life to a gentleman in want of materials for a popular novel. With a frankness that has been of singular loss to me throughout my existence, I opened the goods unreservedly before him. As market-wives say, I let him have the pick and choose of the lot; kept nothing back for a second

huckstering. Well, the buyer left me without a decent event in my basket. Every picturesque accident, from exaggerated homicide to the forgery of a will in a moment of vinous intoxication, was bought, and I confess as much, honestly paid for by the novelist fore-mentioned ; and, if there be truth in human bargains, as indeed there must be when solemnised by a stamp, for otherwise, casuists have their opinions,—the incidental property of my life belongs to the purchaser. I have this consolation : my mundane struggles have affected, delighted, and instructed the world, though labelled with the name of another. Though I have remained, and must remain unknown, my deeds, dressed to the best advantage, have enraptured thousands. Like the ostrich plume waving above the whiter brow of lovely peeress, my life has found its way among the richest, and by consequence, the noblest of the earth,—whilst I, the liver, the poor plucked bird, have wandered over barren sand and fed on iron. But this is a story older than quills.

I have nothing, then, of my life at the service of the reader, but that part of it, the poor remnant following the bargain narrated above. This being my own property, I shall invest it in the present volume. My birth and parentage I have sold, and, I honestly believe, at their full value. There, however, remain to me a few fragments which, like sweepings of a spicery, though not good enough to season a holiday dish, may give an enduring sweetness to a cold body of philosophy. The cloves and cinnamon which the clean-handed huswife would reject for her pudding or custard, may serve for the dead belly of an embalmed Plato. In these days, philosophy itself must be spiced and sweetened, and have its eyes taken out, lest it become noisome in the nostrils of society. That too shall sometimes be the most acceptable body of philosophy, which retains the least hint of bowels.

I know not what business women have with goose-quills, beyond that of plucking them from the bird of mischief that the animal may become the better companion for apple-sauce. The later prejudices of the world have, however, concluded otherwise ; hence, my maiden aunt, Abishag Jones, excelled all the family in her writing ; perhaps it was, that she was the only one of her tribe who wrote bank cheques. My poor father was never so happy as when he could get a pen between the fingers of Aunt Abishag. We grew up, it may be said, with an instinctive reverence, an increasing admiration, of the handwriting of Aunt Jones. Now, I believe it is an acknowledged principle of human action, that what we greatly admire, we often seek to imitate. At all events, it happened so to me. With untiring

energy, I laboured to emulate the flowing delicacy of Aunt Abishag's pen : and at length succeeded to such a nicety, that a gentleman, a perfect stranger, handed over to me fifty pounds as a reward for my zealous ingenuity.

Women are fantastic animals. I make no flourish of this discovery ; indeed, I almost fear that others, it may be in the dark, have stumbled on the hidden truth. My Aunt Abishag was, however, a living and most energetic illustration of the fact ; for it was to be reasonably supposed that she would have felt a flutter of pride at the successful genius of her nephew ; that she would have considered his delicate imitation of her caligraphic powers as an elaborate homage to her best endowment. It was otherwise. Vindicating the prerogative of her sex, she became so capriciously obstreperous, that, respecting even her most violent whimsies, I renounced the world and all its selfishness, and became that which I now am.

"What is that ?" asks the reader.

With a brevity, which I hope will distinguish the small-talk of my future life, I will endeavour to answer the query.

My Aunt Abishag confined not her inquiries of the whereabouts of her ingenious nephew to her personal exertions. Hence, availing herself of the bounteous powers of the press, she caused my portrait to be typographically delineated, and as a most touching proof of her regard for me, offered the princely sum of twenty pounds to whosoever should snatch me from the wily temptations of liberty, and hold me in safe keeping.

I will not attempt to describe the emotions which stirred within my breast, and rose to my throat, as I perused this last affecting evidence of my aunt's regard. Happily, I was diverted from a too intense contemplation of woman's tenderness, by a notice, that, in the same gazette, somewhat irreverently shouldered the manifesto of Aunt Abishag. From that notice I take these words :—

"A Hermit wanted.—To philosophers, misanthropes, or gentlemen in difficulties, a singularly eligible opportunity presents itself. A nobleman of enlarged social views is desirous of engaging an individual for the term of three years in the capacity of hermit. The party engaging will be required to conform to the most rigid discipline of eremite life. No Irishman need apply ; and as the nobleman is desirous of assuring to himself every probable guarantee for the due performance of the contract, married men only will be treated with."

I looked from my Aunt Abishag to the nobleman of enlarged social views—I wavered but for a moment between my affection, my duty to my aunt, and a new-born, romantic desire to let my

beard and nails grow. In brief, for it is in the result only that the reader is interested, here I am, at this moment, in my hermitage—a snug, weatherproof box, eighteen feet by ten—with an oak table, one stool, one platter, one maple cup, a bed of dried rushes, one blanket, one gown, one hat, one staff. Here I am, on the night of this — day of —, in the year of Christian hopes —, with the bell of Coney-hatch Church jerking twelve. Here have I been these twelve months; and if a neighbouring fountain reflect truly, then am I as reverend and venerable an anchorite, especially about the chin, as any nobleman could desire to spend his cash upon. I have more than once thought—and strange to say, there has been a fearful pleasure in the errant notion—that if in this drear solitude I should be made the subject of a popular murder, my locks and beard worked in brooches, earrings, and bracelets, would realise sufficient from the romantic and the curious to endow sundry anxious persons with becoming fortitude for my untimely loss. I have, however, as speedily banished this vanity as unworthy of my new self—as unworthy of a cell, that, according to a very stringent agreement drawn up by the attorney of Coney-hatch, is to be a shrine for unselfish contemplation; a retreat, wherein the highest powers of intellectual man are, by daily exercise, by nightly discipline, to climb the golden chain of necessity, and strike delicious music from every link.

LETTER VII.

THE HERMIT'S "PHILOSOPHY"—CONTINUED.

How pure this atmosphere! How sweet, with opening lungs and in-drawn chest, to take a long, deep, bacchanal draught of midnight air, cool from the stars and odorous with May! With not a taint of urban smoke—with not the fever-heat of corroding mortal life—to infect the soul with maladies of which men daily die, albeit doctors dream not of the true disease! How grand at this moment to hear, in the profound of night, the heart of the earth beat—beat towards eternity! To feel a new affection, as we recognise a new life—closer sympathies with all that presses upon us! To lose our old habitual eyes, that blink dreamily at common-place; with true vision to see spirits ascending and descending from every blade and leaf; and with ears tuned to the most secret melody of nature—that like a happy huswife,

sings as she toils—list the working of that vast laboratory compassed in yon giant oak !

We can do more. Drop through the earth, and, with strengthening heart and health-obtaining brain, look face to face at death, and see a new-found beauty in his barren bones. We can scan him, talk to him, and see a thousand curious beauties—odd, grave blandishments, in the abused wight ; the worthy creature, wronged in our half-knowledge, slandered in the malice of our ignorance. What filthy names—when the broad sun was shining upon us, and we were laughing in the glory of a new doublet and jerkin—have we spat upon him ! How have we mauled him, when we have thought of his wicked will with cousin Bridget—a red-lipped creature with the breath of a heifer ! How did we rate him for a wretch, a beast, a monster dining upon heart-strings—an ogre that blotted out the beauty of the sun—that put a poison into the violet's leaf—that turned all gracious and all lovely things to hideous, ghastly masquerade !—How did we clench our fist, and stamp at him, as, with reeling brain and bursting heart, we stood at thy grave, O Admetus ! and wished ourselves a clod of the valley, to mingle with thy bones !

Fortune is called harlot every hour of the day, and that, too, by grave gentlemen who only abuse the wench before company because they have never known her private favours. Bad as she is, however, let sour-faced Seneca and all the other philosophers of the vinegar-cruet stalk with paper lanterns before her door, they will never bring the romping hoyden into ill repute. No ; she will still be visited, prayed to, cajoled, flattered ; and when she plays a jilt's trick, will be abused as lustily as ever. Yet, what is this universal abuse—this polyglot reviling—for fortune is damned by all colours and in all tongues,—to the foul, ungrateful, scandalous, mean-spirited, shabby—aye, and hypocritical, abuse of death !

Oh, no ! do not believe what is said of death. All folks abuse him, and therefore, if for nothing else, out of the very chivalry of your nature—shake hands with him. No—not hands ; that, for a few years at least, is a little too near. But there—give him the end of your walking-stick, and let him shake that. Well done ! Now, look at him. Hath he not been scurvily limned ? The dirty portrait-painters of the world, learning that the good fellow had so many enemies, have villanously libelled him. Should you recognise, in the fine benevolence now smiling upon you—and surely no chamberlain, with finger on his golden key, ever looked a visitor a sweeter welcome—should you see, in the frank hospitality before you, the sneaking, haggard, noiseless stabber, painted by a million brushes ? Is he not all over—

gentleman ! Behold his face—his frame ! Hath he not the countenance of Adonis, with perhaps a somewhat downward look ? The outline of an Apollo ? He carries a dart. It is no vulgar implement—no piece of torturing cold iron, to pierce and grope in human bowels, but an arrow from the quiver of Eternal Day. It has been used so much in this thick-dew world, that, to the filmy eyes of men, it has lost its brightness ; but it is not so : the immortal ray is under the rust. The meanest, the scurviest abuse has been cast upon all-suffering death. Not one fair gift has been left him. Even the sweetness of his breath has been traduced. Now, madam—nay, put aside your smelling-bottle, and fearlessly approach. There ! Death breathes. Is it not an air from Elysium ? Amaranth, madam—amaranth !

We are content to take up the abuse of the world as truthful censure—to believe in the hard sayings flung in the teeth of death as well-earned reproach. We condemn him by hearsay ; and join in the halloo of an unthinking, ignorant mob. But invite death to a tête-à-tête : divesting yourself of vulgar prejudice, sit down in a place like this—for you are in my hermitage, reader, and calmly and dispassionately chat with him, and you will find the fine old fellow to have been villanously maligned—shamefully scandalised. You will, to your own surprise, and no less comfort, discover in death the noblest benefactor—the staunchest, truest friend. All the naughty things you have heard of him will seem to you as the gossip of cowards—the malice of fools. All the foul paraphernalia—the shroud, the winding-sheet—the wet heavy clay, the worm and corruption at which serious gentlemen shake their heads, and talk for an hour upon, have no more to do with you than with the hare that may nibble the grass above what once was yours : no more touch you than they touch the red-faced urchins making chains of buttercups and daisies on a falsifying tombstone. When moralising wordmongers seize you by the button, and holding up a skull or old earth-smelling tibia to your eye, look straight down their noses, and tell you that in a short time you will be no more than that they thrust in your face,—tell them, with all reverence, they lie. What will your skull, your bones, be to you, more than your corn that was cut out on Thursday—more than that vile double-tooth which, having tortured you for a fortnight, was, a week since, lugged out of your jaw, and left at the dentist's ? It is the vile literalness of people's brains that gives an unhandsomeness to the dead bones of men ; that makes them in the grave a part and parcel of the sentient thing ; that would make their foulness and disgrace a humiliation to the soaring man. You show me his lordship's cast-off court-suit of tarnished silver : that it is cast off, proves to

me that he has possessed himself of a better. Show me the skull of a dead philosopher—nay, of a defunct pickpocket ; commence a dumpish morality on the terrible change of head undergone by sage or thief, and I shall reply to you—It is excellent that it is so ; for, depend upon it, the change is for the better ; he has obtained a much handsomer article.

We libel the sanctity of death, when we dress it in artificial terrors. We profane it, when, applying a moral galvanism to its lineaments, we make it mope and mow at the weak and credulous.

The truth is, we have made too much a mystery of the common-places of death : we have made scarecrows of skeletons, instead of looking upon them with a sort of respect—as we look upon the hat, coat, and breeches of one we once loved,—of one who once wore the articles that were a necessary part of his dress for this world, but that in fact never made any portion of that thing, that essence, which we knew as he. You say, that was his thigh-bone : very well—this was his walking-stick. Bone or cane, one was as much of him as the other : he is alike independent of both. I deny that he is changed—that his dignity is in the remotest degree compromised, because his human furniture is nailed in a box, and crammed in a hole. You might as well preach upon the disgrace of walking-sticks, because our friend's bit of dragon's-blood, after sundry domestic revolutions, has been cut into a dibber. To make a death's-head horrible—to preach from its pretended loathsomeness a lesson to the pride of humanity—to extract from it terrors to the spirit of man, whilst yet consorted with flesh and blood,—the churchyard moralist should prove that the skull remains the ghastly, comfortless prison of the soul,—that, for a certain time, it is ordained its blank and hideous dungeon. Then, indeed, would a death's-head be horrible ; then would it appal a heart of stone and ribs of steel. But, good sexton-preacher, when now you show me a skull, what do I look upon ? The empty shell, through which the bird has risen to the day.

I have learned this in my hermitage—learned it, sitting cheek by jowl with death, talking over his doings, and deeply contemplating the loveliness of his attributes.

LETTER VIII.

CONCLUSION OF THE "HERMETICAL" PHILOSOPHY.

I HAVE learned another trick in this solitude. I have learned to separate the twin natures with which, it is my belief, every man is born, and to sit in judgment upon the vices, the follies, the high feelings, and grovelling appetites, that make up the double *me*. Make a trial of the process, reader. Quit the world for a season. Look boldly into yourself; and however high may have been your notion of the cleanliness of your moral temple, you will, if you look with steady, courageous eyes, blush and marvel at its many dirty little holes and corners, the vile, unswept nooks—the crafty spiders and their noisome webs. And in this temple, to your surprise, you will behold two pulpits for two preachers. In the innocency of your knowledge you thought there was but one divine, and that a most respectable, orthodox, philanthropic creature; punctual in his discourses, exemplary in his discipline—indeed, the very pattern of a devout and cheerful man. You look, and behold, there is another preacher, a fellow with no more reverence in him than in a Malay amuck; a pettifogging, mean-spirited, albeit quick-witted, shuffling scoundrel, whose voice, too, in the throng and press of the world has appeared to you so like the voice of the good, grave gentleman whom you deemed alone in his vocation, that you have a thousand times, without reflection, followed his bidding—unhesitatingly obeyed his behests, and only now, when you have set apart a season for consideration, only now perceive the imposture—recognise the counterfeit.

"What!" you exclaim, "and was it he who prompted me with that bitter answer to poor inoffensive Palemon?" "Was it he who bade me button up my pocket and growl—'No,' to such a petitioner on such a day?" "Was it he who whispered me to cross the road, and cut to the heart the ruined, shabby-coated Damon?" And still further considering the matter, you remember that the interloper monitor, the fellow whose very existence you never suspected, has had nearly all the talk to himself; the grave gentleman, whose voice has been so well imitated, and whom you thought your pastor and your master, having been silenced, out-talked, by the chattering of an unsuspected opponent. I say it, you are twin-souled. Step into my hermitage. Submit to wholesome discipline of thought, and, be

assured of it, you will, in due season, be able to divorce self from self; to arraign your fallen moiety at the bar of conscience; to bring against it a thousand score of crimes, a thousand peccadilloes, all the doings of the scurvy rascal you bear within you, and whose misdeeds are for the first time made known to you.

Well, the court is open.

Who,—you cry,—is that beetle-browed, shuffling, cock-eyed knave at the bar? Is he a poacher, a smuggler, a suborner of false testimony, a swindler, a thief?

Gently, gently, sir: that unfortunate creature is your twin-soul. It was he who in the case of Mr. Suchathing advised you to—

God bless me! I remember—don't speak of it—shocking! —I'm very sorry.

And it was he who, when poor widow Soandso—

There, hold your tongue! I recollect all about it. How have I been deceived by that scoundrel! But then, how could I ever have believed that I carried such a rascal about me?

For my own part, I am firm in the faith that I should never have discovered my own twin varlet had I not shut the door upon the world and taken a good inside stare at myself. No; my hair would have grown grey and my nose wine-coloured—for it hath a purpureal weakness,—and as a distinguished statesman, whose name I forget, once said, I might have patted the back of my naughty twin soul, deeming him a remarkably fine sample of the article; and so gone on, working for a handsome epitaph, and dying with a Christian-like assurance that I had earned the same. I might have lived and died thus self-deluded, but for this retreat so happily opened to me by the illustrious nobleman aforesaid.

"A work of this nature is not to be performed upon one leg; and should smell of oil, if duly and deservedly handled."

Such is the solemn avowal of a fantastically grave philosopher, on the completion of his *opus magnum*; but surely that vaunt hath a more fitting abiding-place in the present page. My subject, too, like that of my brother philosopher, from its innate dignity, its comprehensive usefulness, might employ the goose-quills of a whole college. It were easy to tell off at least five hundred men—many of them having the ears of kings, and what is more, the purse-strings of nations at their command—all of them, by nature and practice, admirably fitted for the work. From their very successes, the world has a claim upon them for

the encyclopædic labour. However, until the time arrive when these men, touched by a sense of their ingratitude, shall repair the wrong, let the present little book receive the welcome due to good intentions. I am content, in the whirl and mutation of all mundane things, to be trumped by a minister, a cardinal, a philosopher, a commercial philanthropist, by any one or one hundred of these. When such men shall have grown sufficiently ingenuous to respond to the crying wants of their fellow-creatures, and shall publish Humbug *in extenso*, I shall sleep quietly beneath the marble monument which the gratitude of my country will erect to my memory, although this little volume, superseded by the larger work, shall be called in like an old coinage, and no longer be made the class-book of the young, the staff of the middle-aged, and the solacing chronicle of the old.

Imperfect as the work may be, it would, I feel, have been impossible to write at all upon Humbug amid the delicious distractions of a city. Is it asked,—wherefore? Alas! the writer would have been confounded by the quantity of his materials. Solitude—continued, profound solitude—was necessary to the gestation and safe delivery of this book. I have endeavoured to show that the true solemnities, the real sweetnesses of death—the mystery of our inner selves, which said mystery we walk about the world with, deeming it of no more complexity than the first mouse-trap,—are only to be approached and looked upon in their utter nakedness when safe from the elbows and the tongues of the world. Now, if life be a mystery, Humbug is at once the art and heart of life. A man may, indeed, get a smattering of moral philosophy in a garret within ear-shot of the hourly courtesies of hackney-coachmen; but Humbug, though she often ride in a coach of her own through the highways of the city, like a fine lady, suffers her pulse to be felt only in private. Humbug is the philosopher's Egeria, and to be wooed and truly known in secret.

Think you, reader, there is no other reason for the sundry prorogations of Parliament, than that the excellent men (selected only for their wisdom and their virtue from their less wise and less virtuous fellows,) having generously presented so many pounds to the state, their services are for a time no longer required? Such is not the profound intent of prorogation. Its benevolent purpose is to send every senator into healthful solitude, that he may fortify himself with a frequent contemplation of his past votes; that he may call up and question his twin soul, and rejoice himself to know that the Dromios within him have given their voices in accordance—that one of the

sneaking gemini, out of the baseness of expected gains, has not cried "Ay," when its nobler fellow stoutly intended "No!"

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CONCLUSION OF THE "HERMIT'S" FRAGMENTS.

LETTER IX.

ON THE "BEAUTY" AND "LUXURY" OF TRUTH.—THE UNALLOYED GUINEAS.

So, my dear child, you have had enough of philosophy—have read enough of the speculations of the Hermit of Coney-hatch, to feel that your yearnings for solitary contemplation were but a passing weakness; to know, that it is in the bustling world about you, true wisdom finds its best, its most enduring reward? Parchment, my dear child, though writ and illuminated with all the glories of the human brain, is a perishable commodity: now, gold in bars will last till the world crack.

I now come to the principal subject of your last letter,—“the beauty of Truth.”

My dear boy, truth is, no doubt, a very beautiful object; so are diamonds, pearls, rubies, emeralds; but, like those sparkling, precious things, it is by no means necessary to your condition of life;—and if sported at all, is only to be enjoyed by way of luxury. Beware, lest a vain conceit should ruin you. The nobleman, the man of independence, may speak truth, as he may wear a brilliant in his breast, worth a hundred guineas. Now, as you must be content with at best a bit of Bristol-stone, with a small imitation of the lustrous reality, so, in like way, can you not afford to utter the true sparkling commodity at all times. Do not suppose, however, that I would have you never speak the truth. Pray, do not misunderstand me. You may, as a man of the world, and a trader who would turn the prudent penny,—you may always speak the truth when it can be in no way to your advantage not to utter it.

At the same time, my beloved boy, take heed that you obtain not the evil reputation of a liar. “What!”—I think I hear you exclaim,—“your advice, papa, involves a contradiction.” By no means. What I wish to impress upon you, is the necessity of so uttering your verbal coinage, that to the superficial eye and

careless ear, it may have all the appearance, all the ring of the true article. Herein consists the great wisdom of life. The thousands who have grown rich by its application to all their worldly concerns are incalculable. The world, as at present constituted, could not go on without lying. And, I am convinced, it is only the full conviction of this fact that enables so many worthy, excellent people to club their little modicum of daily falsehood together, for the benevolent purpose of keeping the world upon its axis.

For a moment, consider the effect produced in London alone, if from to-morrow morning, for one month only, every man, woman, and child were to speak the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. You have read of towns besieged, of cities sacked, of the unbridled fury of a sanguinary soldiery; but all this would be as sport to the horrors of this our most civilised metropolis. Gracious Plutus! Think of the bankruptcies! Imagine the confessions of statesmen! Consider the internal revelations of churchmen! Only reflect upon the thousands and thousands of—at present—most respectable, exemplary people, congregated in the highways and market-places, making a “clean breast” to one another,—each man shocking his neighbour with the confession of his social iniquity, of his daily hypocrisy, of his rascal vice that he now feeds and coddles like a pet snake in private! If all men were thus to turn themselves inside out, the majority of blacks would, I fear, be most alarming. We might have Hottentot chancellors, and even Ethiopian bishops!

A wise German, named Goethe, has observed—“There is something in every man, which, if known to his fellow, would make him hate him.” How, then, could the world go on with this reciprocal passion of hatred? Philosophic statesmen, conscious of this fact, have therefore leavened every social institution with a necessary and most wholesome amount of falsehood. Hence, too, we have what are called legal fictions. Hence, Justice, the daughter of Truth, debauched by Law, gives, with a solemn smirk, short weight to the poor, and a lumping pen’orth to the rich.

What are the fees paid to hungry, hundred-handed office, but offerings exacted by falsehood? What is the costliness of Justice, but the wilful extravagance of lying—the practical mendacity of life? Truth, by a paradoxical fiction, is painted naked; and Justice is robed in plain, unspotted white. Why, the old harridan must have as many gew-gaws—as many big-beaded necklaces—brooches—pins—chains, and armlets, as the wife of a Jew bailiff. These things she must have, or what does she with the presents made to her—the fees exacted?

I tell you again and again, all truth will not do in this world. I will give you a short story, in illustration of the reality of this.

How, or by what accident, they escaped from the Mint, was never known, but certain it is, that one hundred guineas of pure gold, without the least alloy, were once upon a time issued to the world. Old Gregory Muckly, by chance, obtained half-a-dozen pieces of this coin, which, together with a few other pieces, were carefully hoarded in a worsted stocking: and when Gregory was safely deposited in churchyard clay, they became the rightful property of his son Hodge.

Hodge was a simple, honest creature; caring nothing for the pomps of the world;

"The sum of all his vanity, to deck
With one bright bell some fav'rite heifer's neck."

Business, however, brought him to London. Well, before he returned to Gammon Farm, he would purchase a London present—a bran new scarlet shawl for sister Suke. Two guineas did Hodge, with fraternal self-complacency, set apart for this gift. Caught by the truthful assurance exhibited in a mercer's window that the stock was "selling off under prime cost," Hodge thought he was sure of at least a three-guinea shawl for two. Hereupon, he entered the shop; rolled his eyes from side to side, seeking the radiant present for sister Suke.

"Have you a nice, bran new scarlet shawl for two guineas?" asked Hodge.

"Sir," replied the shopkeeper, "you come at a lucky moment: we have the most delicious article—the most wonderful scarlet. To anybody else, sir, it would be three guineas and a half; but as you have frequently been a customer to us"—

"Nay, nay," cried Hodge, "I was never here before."

"I beg your pardon, sir; humbly beg your pardon—another gentleman like you," said the tradesman.

"I'm no gentleman, neither," said Hodge; "and all I want is, you to show me the shawl."

"There, sir," said the mercer, throwing the shawl upon the counter; "there's a scarlet."

"Ha! ha! so it be—like a poppy," chuckled Hodge.

"A poppy, sir,—a poppy's brickdust to it," said the tradesman.

"Nay, nay, not so," cried Hodge; "and I think I've seen more poppies than thee."

"Ha! ha! no doubt, sir—very true. Well, I assure you, to anybody else this article would be three guineas and a half; but to you, we'll say two."

"There they be," said Hodge; and he laid down the two unalloyed guineas on the counter.

As the tradesman took up the coin, a shadow fell upon his face; and turning to his shopman, he whispered, "Run for a constable." Then addressing himself to Hodge, he said—"Walk this way, if you please."

In two minutes Hodge was in the mercer's back parlour; in five, in the custody of a constable; and in ten more, arraigned before a magistrate, being charged with an attempt to pass off bad money.

"Look at the things, your worship; look at their colour—feel 'em—they'll bend like pewter; and to attempt to pass such pocket-pieces upon an honest tradesman,—really!" and the mercer was bursting with indignation.

Hodge's defence was not listened to, and he was sent to gaol for two days, until a proper officer from the Mint could be in attendance to pronounce judgment on the suspected guineas.

"Indeed, this is curious," said Mr. Testem, the Mint functionary; "but I don't wonder at your suspicions: the fact is, these guineas are *too good*." Mr. Testem then narrated that a hundred pieces of coin, of pure, unalloyed gold, had been accidentally issued, and that Hodge's two guineas were of them.

My son—he who in this world resolves to speak only the truth, will speak only what is *too good* for the mass of mankind to understand, and, like Hodge, will be persecuted accordingly.

LETTER X.

EVERY MAN HIS OWN APPRAISER.—LEGEND OF THE RIGHT LEG.

YOUR last letter, my dear son, annoyed, oppressed me. What! you wish you had been born an Esquimaux, a Chippewaw, a Hottentot, rather than a member of the most civilised, most generous nation (as every people modestly say of themselves) on the face of the earth. Ungrateful boy! is this the return you make me for the very handsome present of your existence,—is this your gratitude for being called out of nothing to become an *eating, drinking, tax-paying animal*?

Despondency, my child, is the slow suicide of the mind. Heaven knows what I have suffered at the hands of the world !—how, with my heart bleeding into my very shoes, I have still chirped and crowed *roo-tooit-tooit*, despising while I laughed with and chattered to the reeking rascals, niggard of their pence, who still thronged and gaped about me.

“ Alas ! 'tis true, I have gone here and there,
And made myself a motley to the view,
Gored mine own thoughts, sold cheap what is most dear,
Made old offences of affections new.”

Nevertheless, if now and then my heart has been a little slack, I have braced it up again with my drum, and looking upon life at the best as composed of just so many pleasurable sensations, I have enjoyed myself as often as I could, which I have thought the very wisest way of showing my gratitude for my existence. When I could not obtain large pleasures, I put together as many small ones as possible. Small pleasures, depend upon it, lie about as thick as daisies ; and for that very reason are neglected, trodden under foot, instead of being worn in our button-holes. We cannot afford to buy moss-roses at Christmas, or camellias at any time : and so, all the year round we couple buttercups with vulgarity ; and the lovely, odorous things that grow in the hedge-side, we let wither where they grow, for no other reason than that the king's highway is not a royal garden.

At the same time, my dear boy, I would not have you copy the contentment of your father. Contentment is very well in a pastoral ; and I have seen something which called itself Contentment, sitting smugly at a small-coal fire, enjoying its crust and half-a-pint of beer in a tin mug on the hob,—only because it would not stir itself to get the port and olives, that with very little exertion were within its reach. Though I know this to be pusillanimity, and not contentment, nevertheless, my dear child, I cannot altogether acquit myself of it. Be warned by your sire. I might, with my genius, have trod the boards of a play-house,—have had my name upon the walls, in type that blacking-makers should have envied ; I might have danced quadrilles in Cavendish-square on my off-nights, and been trundled about the town in my own air-cushioned carriage ; for I have all the qualifications in the highest degree which lead to such a golden result.—Of this I am assured by their success as poorly and extravagantly copied by another : but no, I was doomed to be a street vagabond, and came into the world with a base taste for mud in my infant mouth, and an ear throbbing for drum and pandeans. Hence, I have—when doing my best—been scoffed at, and abused by

fish-wives, when, with the sagacious application of the same powers, I might have been pelted by heiresses with nosegays from the boxes!

My child, know not diffidence: it is an acquaintance that hourly picks your pocket—that makes you hob-and-nob with fustian, when otherwise, you might jostle it with court ruffles. Receive this for an axiom: nineteen times out of twenty the world takes a man at his own valuation. A philosopher—I forget his name—has called the human soul, on its first manifestation in this world, thickly veiled as it is in baby-flesh—a blank sheet of paper. Now I, my son, call every full-grown man at his outset in life, a piece, not of blank, but of *bank-paper*; in fact, a note, in all things perfect save that the amount is not written in. It is for the man himself to put down how many pounds it shall pass for; to snatch an eagle-quill, and, with a brow of bronze and eye of brass, to write down

£ One Thousand

or else, with shaking hand and lips of indigo, to scratch a miserable, pauper-stricken, squalid—

£ One

It is, I say, for the man himself to give value to his own moral paper: and though, I grant, now and then the prying and ill-natured may hold up the article to the light to search for the true water-mark, the owner of the note has only to swagger and put the face of a Cæsar on the transaction, to silence every scruple.

As an instance, my dear boy, of what perseverance will do—of what an inexorable advocacy of merit (or fancied merit, for that is the thing) will do for the professor,—I will give you a short story, drawn from a Dutch annalist of the sixteenth century.

Serene and balmy was the 9th of June morning, 1549, when three men dressed as heralds, and superbly mounted on piebald horses, appeared in the streets of Utrecht. Immediately behind them, mounted on a mule richly caparisoned, rode a man, or rather a human bundle—a hunchback, with his right leg less than a goose's over-roasted drumstick; the leg was, moreover, bowed like a pot-hook; and, as at first was thought, that its deformity might be fully seen, was without hose or shoe; in

plain words—it was a naked leg. The dwarf was followed by six horsemen, handsomely arrayed, and strongly mounted.

The procession halted before the burgomaster's door, when the heralds, putting their trumpets to their lips, blew so loud a blast that every man's money danced in his pocket. The crowd with gaping mouths and ears awaited the proclamation of the herald, who thus unburthened himself:

"Let it be known to all corners of the creation, that our most noble, most puissant master, now present, the right valorous and worthy Vandenhoppenlimpen, has the most perfect right leg of all the sons of earth! In token whereof, he now exhibiteth the limb; whereat, let all men shout and admire!"

On the instant, the dwarf cocked up his withered stump, self-complacently laying his hand upon his heart; and at the same moment the crowd screamed and roared, and abused and reviled the dwarf, whilst some market-women discharged ancient eggs and withered apples at him,—until the procession, followed by the roaring populace, made their way back to their hostelry.

The next morning, at the same place and like hour, the same proclamation was made. Again the undaunted dwarf showed his limb, and again he was chased and pelted.

And every day for six months, the unwearied heralds proclaimed the surpassing beauty of Vandenhoppenlimpen's right leg, and every day the leg was exhibited. And after a time, every day the uproar of the mob decreased; and the leg was considered with new and growing deference.

"After all, we must have been mistaken—there surely is something in the leg," said one contemplative burgher.

"I have some time thought so," answered another.

"Tisn't likely," said a third, "that the man would stand so to the excellence of his leg, unless there were something in it, not to be seen at once."

"It is my faith," said the burgomaster's grandmother—"a faith I'll die in, for I have heard the sweet man himself say as much a hundred-and-fifty times, that all other right legs are clumsy and ill-shaped, and that Vandenhoppenlimpen's leg is the only leg on the earth, made as a leg should be."

In a short season, this faith became the creed of the mob; and, oh, how the neighbouring cities, towns, and villages emptied themselves into Utrecht, to gaze and marvel at Vandenhoppenlimpen's leg! When he died, a model of the limb was taken, and cast in virgin gold, is now used as a tobacco-stopper on state occasions at the Stadt-house of Utrecht.

My child, there are at this moment many Vandenhoppen-

limpens eating bread very thickly buttered, from having stoutly championed the surpassing merits of their bowed and bucked right leg.

LETTER XI.

ON THE NECESSITY OF HYPOCRISY—STORY OF THE LEMON MERCHANT.

No, I have no sympathy, my son—none whatever, for you. What! to have scraped a very promising acquaintance with a man of Alderman Bilberry's wealth—to have had him more than once nod to you; and then, when fortune—a happy fortune! as it might have turned out—throws you both together in the same Greenwich boat, to lose the alderman for ever! You will say, the alderman acted meanly, dirtily, shabbily; will tell me, that you saw him only five minutes before take twopence in change for a glass of ginger-beer, when, at the same time, he regretted to the trumpeter, who came round the deck to gather for himself and musical companions, that "he had not a copper about him, or would give it with the greatest pleasure." What devil, may I ask you, tempted you to jog the alderman's memory on the ginger-beer and penny-pieces? You will say to me, the alderman told a lie, the alderman acted shabbily; and, therefore, you reproved him; and, what you doubtless think a splendid peacock's feather in your cap, you reproved him with a joke! I shall certainly write no more to you, if I find my letters do you so little service.

My son, never see the meanness of mankind. Let men hedge, and shirk, and shift, and lie, and with faces of unwrinkled adamant tell you the most monstrous falsehoods, either in their self-glorification, or to disguise some habitual paltriness, still, never detect the untruth; never lay your finger on the patch they have so bunglingly sewed upon their moral coat, but let them depart with the most religious persuasion that they have triumphantly bamboozled you. By these means, although you are most efficiently assisting in the hypocrisy of life, you will be deemed a sociable, a most good-natured fellow. Be stone-blind, and you will be benevolent; be deaf, and you will be all heart. To have an insight—or at least to show you have it—into the dirty evasions of life, is to have a moral squint. To lay your finger upon a plague-spot, is to be infected with malice. No: though you meet with men scurfed with moral leprosy, see not the scales,

but cry out lustily, "What perfect gentlemen!" To discover meanness in men, is, in men's opinion, to be strongly tintured with the iniquity.

Mr. Chaucer, in allusion to the devil, says of him,

"He hath in Jewè's heart his waspè's nest."

Now, what we call the devil, has built—by the agency of his demon wasps, Pride, Avarice, Scorn, Oppression, Selfishness, and others—thousands of nests in the hearts both of Jews and Christians. Well, suppose you have the power of looking into their hearts as though they were so many crystal hives,—suppose you behold in them the rapacious insects—hear their buzzing—almost see their stings; if you cry "Wasps! wasps!" men will shake their heads at you for a malicious, evil-minded fellow; but, my dear boy, clap your hands, and cry, "What a honey-comb!" and you shall pass from mouth to mouth as the "best of creatures." When you have seen something more of the world, you will know that men rarely attribute an exposure of a social evil to an inherent indignation of the evil itself, but to an unhealthy appetite for moral foulness. Then, my boy, will they most virtuously defame you—then will they, in the name of outraged virtue, call you hard, high-sounding names. The wrestlers of old, says Plutarch, threw dirt on one another that they might get a better grasp, and more successfully trip up each other's heels. In the like way, does ignorance or hypocrisy, in the name of virtue, cast dirt upon him who would trip up a giant wrong. There were, doubtless, those among the Philistines—particular and most virtuous friends of Goliath—who called David a very sour-natured little fellow.

It is extraordinary, too, how this scandal will stick upon you; how it will be used to misinterpret all your motives—to give a twist to your most heroic, most benevolent actions. I will suppose that you are crossing a bridge, or walking by a river's side. Well, a nursery-maid—thinking, it may be, of Jack Robinson, whom she is to meet when the child is put to bed—is so far buried in her thoughts that she lets the baby tumble souse into the stream. You may not swim like a dolphin, yet without waiting to take off your coat, or lay your gold repeater on the grass, you leap into the water, and with no small personal risk manage to bring the baby safe to the bank. Well, you think yourself entitled to at least the good opinion of the world for your heroism. Alas! you have been such a bitter person all your life, you have told such disagreeable verities, you have so constantly refused to club in with that conventional hypocrisy that has neither eyes nor nose for social blotch or social taint,

that Detraction denies to you one word of praise for your ducking ; but gravely insists that your sole reason for jumping into the river was this,—you *thought you saw* a silver spoon shining at the bottom.

Having obtained a name for ill-nature, or in reality having acquired a fatal reputation for using your eyes, it will be in vain for you to deal in praise of anything. No: the people who profess to know you will, like witches, read even your prayers backwards ; will insist that there is some lurking mischief, some subtle abuse, in what appears to be unmixed and heartfelt eulogy. Offer what you will to the world, the world will declare you only deal in one commodity. You will be in the condition of the man who sold lemons. His history being very short, and at the same time touchingly illustrative of the evil I would warn you against, shall be set down in this letter.

There was, in a certain city, a man who sold lemons. From boyhood until forty, he had dealt in no other fruit ; and with those who needed lemons, his stock was in good request. And so years passed away, and the man made a tolerable living of his merchandise, though a certain bluntness of manner, a resolution never to take one farthing less of a customer than he first asked, did somewhat keep down the profits of his calling. Throughout the city the man was known by no other title than the Lemon Merchant. At length, but how it came to pass I know not, lemons ceased to be in demand : no man, woman, or child, purchased a lemon—lemons seemed, henceforth, to be the forbidden fruit : crowds of passengers passed the man's basket, but no one spent a single obolus. Want, starvation, threatened our lemon-merchant. What was he to do ? It was plain the fashion had turned from lemons, and had set in for nothing but oranges. Well, my son, you would think it was some good genius that whispered to the man, "Give up thy lemon basket ; do not vainly strive to huckster with what is now the accursed fruit, but sell what little goods thou hast, and hieing to the market, there buy thee oranges ; sweet, delicious oranges ; oranges, luscious as the flesh of Venus." The lemon-merchant followed the advice of his counsellor, and selling up all he had in the world, invested the money in a box of magnificent oranges: they were the finest in the market ; the mouths of emperors might have watered for them ; they were a gladdening picture to the eye—a restorative perfume to the nose. Since the oranges that wooed the lip of Eve in Paradise, there never had been such oranges.

It was a grand holiday, when for the first time our henceforth

orange-merchant took his customary stand at the steps of the Church of St. Angelica. His eye twinkled, and his heart swelled with honest pride as he looked at the passengers who thronged by him, and then again looked at the golden fruit piled in his basket at his foot. It was very strange; but though all the orange-dealers about him sold their stock in a trice, although he was left with the only oranges near the church, no one, albeit seeking oranges, offered to buy the fruit of him. At last, the man took heart, and cried to the people as they passed, "Oranges; sweet, sweet oranges! Buy my oranges!"

"Oranges, fellow!" cried the passengers, "what impudence is this? Isn't it clear that there isn't an orange in your basket— isn't it certain that you deal in nothing but lemons?"

It was in vain for the man to bawl "Oranges!" for there was no one who heard him, who did not laugh and sneer, and answer, "Pooh! pooh! Lemons!"

My dear son, once get a reputation (as you have done with Alderman Bilberry) for the acidity of truth, and though your lips, like the lips of the infant Plato, shall distil honey, the world will not believe in the sweetness. Offer what oranges you will, the world will repay the offering with the cry of—"Lemons."

LETTER XII.

ON THE PHILOSOPHY OF BORROWING.—HOPKINS'S UMBRELLA.

You ask me to supply you with a list of books, that you may purchase the same for your private delectation. My dear boy, receive this, and treasure it for a truth: no wise man ever purchases a book. Fools buy books, and wise men—borrow them. By respecting, and acting upon this axiom, you may obtain a very handsome library for nothing.

Do you not perceive, too, that by merely borrowing a volume at every possible opportunity, you are obtaining for yourself the reputation of a reading man; you are interesting in your studies dozens of people who, otherwise, would care not whether you knew A, B, C, or not? With your shelves thronged with borrowed volumes, you have an assurance that your hours of literary meditation frequently engage the thoughts of, alike, intimate and casual acquaintance. To be a good borrower of books is to get a sort of halo of learning about you, not to be obtained by laying out money upon printed wisdom. For

instance, you meet Huggins. He no sooner sees you than, pop, you are associated with all the Cæsars ; he having—simple Huggins!—lent you his Roman History bound in best historic calf. He never beholds you but he thinks of Romulus and Remus, the Tarpeian Rock, the Rape of the Sabines, and ten thousand other interesting and pleasurable events. Thus, you are doing a positive good to Huggins by continually refreshing his mind with the studies of his thoughtful youth ; whilst, as I say, your appearance, your memory, is associated and embalmed by him with things that “ will not die.”

Consider the advantage of this. To one man you walk as Hamlet ; why ? you have upon your shelves that man's best edition of Shakspeare. To another, you come as the archangel Michael. His illustrated Paradise Lost glitters amongst your borrowings. To this man, by the like magic, you are Robinson Crusoe ; to this, Telemachus. I will not multiply instances ; they must suggest themselves. Be sure, however, on stumbling upon what seems a rare and curious volume, to lay your borrowing hands upon it. The book may be Sanscrit, Coptic, Chinese ; you may not understand a single letter of it ; for which reason, be more sternly resolved to carry it away with you. The very act of borrowing such a mysterious volume implies that you are in some respects a deep fellow—invests you with a certain literary dignity in the eyes of the lending. Besides, if you know not Sanscrit at the time you borrow, you may before you die. You cannot promise yourself what you shall not learn ; or, once having borrowed the book, what you shall not forget.

There are three things that no man but a fool lends—or having lent, is not in the most hopeless state of mental crassitude if he ever hope to get back again. These three things, my son, are—BOOKS, UMBRELLAS, and MONEY ! I believe, a certain fiction of the law assumes a remedy to the borrower ; but I know no case in which any man, being sufficiently dastard to gibbet his reputation as plaintiff in such a suit, ever fairly succeeded against the wholesome prejudices of society.

In the first place, books being themselves but a combination of borrowed things, are not to be considered as vesting even their authors with property. The best man who writes a book, borrows his materials from the world about him, and therefore, as the phrase goes, cannot come into court with clean hands. Such is the opinion of some of our wisest law-makers ; who, therefore, give to the mechanist of a mouse-trap, a more lasting property in his invention than if he had made an Iliad. And why ? The mouse-trap is of wood and iron ; trees, though springing from the earth, are property ; iron, dug from the bowels of the

earth, is property : you can feel it, hammer it, weigh it : but what is called literary genius is a thing not ponderable, an essence (if, indeed, it be an essence) you can make nothing of, though put into an air-pump. The mast, that falls from beech, to fatten hogs, is property ; as the forest-laws will speedily let you know, if you send in an alien pig to feed upon it : but it has been held, by wise, grave men in Parliament, that what falls from human brains to feed human souls, is no property whatever. Hence, private advantage counsels you to borrow all the books you can ; whilst public opinion abundantly justifies you in never returning them.

I have now to speak of UMBRELLAS. Would you, my son, from what you have read of Arab hospitality—would you think of counting out so many penny-pieces, and laying them in the hand of your Arab host, in return for the dates and camel's milk that, when fainting, dying, with thirst, hunger, and fatigue, he hastened to bestow upon you ? Would you, I say, chink the copper coin in the man's ear, in return for this kindly office, which the son of the desert thinks an "instrumental part of his religion ?" If, with an ignorance of the proper usages of society, you would insult that high-souled Arab by any tender of money, then my son—but no ! I think you incapable of the sordidness of such an act,—then would you return a Borrowed Umbrella ?

Consider it. What is an umbrella but a tent that a man carries about with him—in China, to guard him from the sun,—in England, to shelter him from the rain ? Well, to return such a portable tent to the hospitable soul who lent it,—what is it but to offer the Arab payment for shelter ? What is it but to chaffer with magnanimity, to reduce its greatness to a mercenary lodging-house-keeper ? Umbrellas may be "hedged about" by cobweb statutes ; I will not swear it is not so ; there may exist laws that make such things property ; but sure I am that the hissing contempt, the loud-mouthed indignation of all civilised society, would sibilate and roar at the bloodless poltroon, who should engage law on his side to obtain for him the restitution of a—lent umbrella !

We now come to—MONEY. I have had, in my time, so little of it, that I am not very well informed on monetary history. I think, however, that the first Roman coin was impressed with a sheep. A touching and significant symbol, crying aloud to all men,—"*Children, fleece one another.*" My son, it is true that the sheep has vanished from all coin : nevertheless, it is good to respect ancient symbols : therefore, whatever the gold or silver may bear—whatever the potentate, whatever the arms upon the

obverse—see with your imaginative eye nothing but the sheep ; listen with your fancy's ear to nought but—"fleece"—"fleece !"

I am aware, that a prejudice exists amongst the half-educated, that borrowed money is as money obtained by nothing ; that, in fact, it is not your own ; but is only trusted in your hands for such and such a time. My son beware of this prejudice ; for it is the fruit of the vilest ignorance. On the contrary, look upon all borrowed money, as money dearly, richly earned by your ingenuity in obtaining it. Put it to your account as the wages of your intellect, your address, your reasoning or seductive powers. Let this truth, my son, be engraven upon your very brain-pan. To borrow money is the very highest employment of the human intellect : to pay it back again, is to show yourself a traitor to the genius that has successfully worked within you.

You may, however, wish to know how to put off your creditor—how to dumbfound him, should the idiot be clamorous. One answer will serve for books, umbrellas, and money. As for books, by the way, you may always have left them in a hackney-coach. (This frequent accident of book-borrowers, doubtless, accounts for the literary turn of most hackney-coachmen.) Still, I will supply you with one catholic answer.

Hopkins once lent Simpson, his next-door neighbour, an umbrella. You will judge of the intellect of Hopkins, not so much from the act of lending an umbrella, but from his insane endeavour to get it back again.

It poured in torrents. Hopkins had an urgent call. Hopkins knocked at Simpson's door. "I want my umbrella." Now Simpson also had a call in a directly opposite way to Hopkins ; and with the borrowed umbrella in his hand, was advancing to the threshold. "I tell you," roared Hopkins, "I want my umbrella."—"Can't have it," said Simpson. "Why, I want to go to the East-end, it rains in torrents ; what"—screamed Hopkins—"what am I to do for an umbrella ?"

"Do !" answered Simpson, darting from the door—"do as I did ; BORROW ONE !"

LETTER XIII.

HOW LEARNING MAY BE OBTAINED—BY SHAVING: AND
OTHER MEANS.

You tell me, I have not answered your request. You say, you feel—and I hope you do—the full force of my arguments on the beauty of borrowing: nevertheless, I have not forwarded to you the list of books that, of all others, are the first to be borrowed. You say you wish to become a reader. It is a laudable aspiration.

Readers, my dear son, are of two sorts. There is a reader who carefully goes through a book; and there is a reader who as carefully lets the book go through him. Which do you desire to be?

Whilst it is necessary that you should have the mere cant phrases of literature, I would, as your affectionate father, counsel you against any unseemly pedantry. You may, without sacrificing any of the time due to the serious purposes of life, obtain a sufficient knowledge of books, whereby to pass for a man of very considerable information; and, in this world, a successful seeming is every bit as good as the real thing. Look around upon men; behold the stations they fill, and tell me if it be not so.

You shave once a day. Well, purchase a cheap copy of Blackstone's Commentaries on the Laws of England. You will perceive that in his Preface, Sir William speaks of the necessity of every gentleman knowing something of the statutes he lives under. Now, my dear boy, I would have you learn the laws of your country, as I would have you, ere you entered an orchard to pluck the best fruit growing there, know the whereabouts of the man-traps and the wires of the spring-guns. Having such knowledge, you may here pluck a pipin, here gather a plum; and cramming your pockets full of the juiciest produce of the place, return over the wall whence you came without a single scratch, and altogether shot-free. Now, you have only to consider the whole world an orchard guarded by the man-traps and spring-guns of laws: and have only to know *where* the laws are laid, that though you intrude upon them ever so closely, you are never caught or hit by them. Do this, and who is to charge you with having pilfered a single codlin? You have never been caught in the trap, the law has never fired upon you, and you have therefore your action for libel against any man who shall dare so much as to wink at you and whisper "Codlins!"

To return. You shave once a day.* Well, tear off a leaf of Blackstone, and whilst you are stropping your razor, carefully read it. This is so much time saved ; and by this daily practice, you will in due season digest the whole of the Commentaries. Sometimes you will go over your beard a second or a third time,—whereupon, strop your razor again and again, and go through two or three pages. I knew a Lord Chancellor who, like Lord Chesterfield's friend, was "such an economist of time," that he went through all the statutes only in this manner. Being happily blessed with a very stubborn beard, he lathered himself at least thrice a morning ; on each occasion getting by heart three leaves of legal wisdom. I have known him declare that as a lawyer, he was confident he owed all his prosperity in life to close shaving.

You are to consider that the operation of shaving is singularly auspicious to study. The soul seems retired from the surrounding vanities of the world, and takes refuge in itself. A great novelist has declared that if, when he rose from his desk, he left a pair of lovers in a quandary, had his hero or heroine at a dead lock, wanted a lucky escape, or an ingenious discovery,—he went to bed serenely certain that the whole difficulty would be solved with the shaving soap of the next morning.† Hence, his novels may be considered as much the offspring of the razor as of the goose-quill. I much question whether the lack of imaginative works among the modern Jewish Rabbis may not be attributed to their copiousness of beard ; they never shave ; hence, in a lofty, dignifying sense, they never think.

Having gone through Blackstone, razor in hand, you may then in like manner address yourself to ancient and modern history.

You will know quite as much of the Medes and Persians, the builders of the Pyramids, Magna Charta, and all such shadowy matters, after a month's good stropping,—as if you had sat with your brow between your thumbs, pondering and dreaming for a twelvemonth. You will have got by heart a pretty catalogue of names ; and names, not things, are quite sufficient for a man, if he will but troll them boldly over his tongue, as though he had the most intimate acquaintance with all that belonged to them. "Virtue and learning," says Philip Lord Chesterfield, "like gold, have their intrinsic value ; but if they are not polished, they certainly lose a great deal of their lustre : and even polished brass will pass upon more people than rough gold." Lord Chesterfield knew what was due to life and—the peerage.

* Punch confesses that he owes the idea of this process to the Earl of Chesterfield, who in his "Letter ci." to his son, suggests even a more ingenious mode of absorbing the essence of "all the Latin Poets."

† See Lockhart's "Life of Scott."

There is also another way of obtaining the wisdom of books. You have doubtless seen the advertisements of benevolent sages who profess to cure disease by simply smelling certain drugs and simples. Nothing need be swallowed, nothing need be administered. These doctors owe nothing to the natural teaching of the ibis, to whom, if history speak truly, Esculapius was so much indebted. All they require is, that a patient shall have a nose ; and that organ granted, they guarantee a cure. In like manner, do many very clever people obtain learning : they smell the volumes—nothing more. They take a good sniff of a book, and history, politics, poetry, polemics, all fly up their nose in particles, like so much hartshorn ; nor is such a mode of education, in the words of the Rev. Dr. Busby, to be sneezed at.

If this were not the fact, do you think so many persons would purchase libraries ? Do you suppose they buy the books to pore over them ? Certainly not. It is sufficient that they have the volumes on the shelves ; an aroma of learning arises from them ; it is received into the system of the owner, and he is, and cannot help it, learned. If this were not the case, think you so many human asses would lay out so much money on russia-bindings ? No : they carefully shelve the books, and catch learning, as they sometimes catch cold, by coming down the staircase.

Having said thus much, it is, I think, unnecessary for me to give you a list of books for your private study. All that is necessary, is to borrow the volumes, and those as handsome as possible, and having once secured the books, the learning in them is, of course, your own. I would, however, advise you to carefully study *The Newgate Calendar*, a work enshrining so many instances of human ingenuity, courage and suffering ; a mine of gold from which philosophic novelists have cast pocket-heroes for ladies, and mantel-piece ornaments for boarding-schools. You will find in the literary off-shoots of the records of the gallows, that the human soul is in its composition, very like a ball of India-rubber ; the lower it falls, the higher it bounds. Or it may be likened to the Greek fire, that burns the brightest in a common sewer.

I would advise you also to take a peep into the Grecian mythology ; there are some pretty names there with which you may sometimes spangle your discourse, not unprofitably. There is also much moral instruction to be gathered from the stories. Let me particularly recommend to you the tale of the abduction of Proserpine by Pluto. Proserpine has been promised a full divorce from the king of hell, if she have tasted nothing in his dominions. Unable to control herself, she has taken a

pomegranate seed, and the divorce does not stand good. I have no doubt (if it could be discovered) that this case has been considered in many nice judgments of the Ecclesiastical Court.

History has been called "philosophy teaching by example." You may, if you will, consult it in this spirit; but the truest philosophy teaching by example that ever came under my notice, was in a little town in France, at a bookseller's shop.

The beautiful national song *Malbrough s'en va-t-en guerre*, words and music, lay open in the window; and there stood an old Frenchwoman, holding in her hand a little Gaul of some six years old, whom like a young starling she was at once teaching words and song. What a labour of love she made of her task! How she crowed forth the air, jiggling, as it does, with contempt for England, and how the child chirruped after her!

"Malbrough s'en va-t-en guerre,
Miron-ton, miron-ton, miron-taine,
Malbrough s'en va-t-en guerre,
Ne sait quand reviendra!"

"There, indeed," said I to myself, gazing on the old woman and her pupil; "there, indeed, is History—there is Philosophy teaching by example!"

LETTER XIV.

THE EVIL OF SENSIBILITY.—STORY OF THE BANKER'S CLERK.

A MAN who would thrive in the world has no such enemy as what is known by the term—sensibility. It is to walk barefooted in a mob: at every other step your toes are crushed by the iron-shod shoon of crowding vagabonds, who grin from ear to ear at the wry faces you make, at the cries that may escape you. "Why didn't you stay at home?" asks one; "Put your toes in your pocket," counsels another; quite unconscious of the deep philosophy enriching his advice. Yes, my son; difficult as it may appear, the only thing for the man to do—that is, the poor man born with sensibility—is to put his toes into his pocket; in plain words, to smother his sensibility in the place where he hopes some day to carry his money.

Many are the martyrs, my son, whose lives will never be penned. Many the victims who, in garrets and in cellars, have vindicated what is called the heroism of human nature, and by

the awful magnanimity of suffering, given assurance of the ethereal temper of the human spirit. How many, even with earthly famine whitening their lips, have smiled in lovely patience, thinking of immortal tables! How many, in the tatters of beggary, reeking in the nostrils of their fellow-man, have appalled themselves for God! The looks of angels have made bright the darkness of a dungeon; and the odours of seraphic wings sweetened the vapours of a vault.

But no, my son, I must not pursue this theme. Who would think that I could talk thus? I! a mountebank—a nummer—the buffoon for halfpence? Oh, my son, it was shallow philosophy; it was worse; it was a wicked want of charity in Dr. Johnson to exclaim, "PUNCH has no feelings!" The world, I grant gives me but little credit for such possessions; and, therefore, I am prone to wrap myself up in the pride of mystery, and to affect insensibility, that I may escape the charge of hypocrisy. Who would believe in the tears of PUNCH? Who, though he saw them trickling down my nose, would believe they came hot and bitter from my heart? A heart! Said I a heart? Who would believe I had such an organ? Albeit I were laid upon the surgeon's table, the crucial incision made in my breast—nay, the heart itself plucked out—who would believe in its ventricles? A heart! A cushion—a thing stuffed with bran, to stick pins in: for so the world has used it. My son, PUNCH is not the only creature thus libelled, because inwardly unknown. The Poverty of the world is but a pale-faced, melancholy Punch; a creature denied sensibility, that it may be made to bear the harder buffets. Allow to Poverty all the fine moral organisation—the same susceptibility that makes the system of the rich man delicately melodious as a musical snuff-box,—and we should give ear to the utterance of human wants as to a flood of holy song; as to the most plaintive, yet most sacred music of the habitable earth. But no; the organisation is disallowed, and therefore such music is impossible. Thus is it with Poverty in the ears of Worldly Pride; and thus to Worldly Ignorance is—PUNCH!

However, the purpose of these letters is to fit you for a prosperous career in life; and therefore, I charge you, by all your hopes of larder, wine-cellar, banker's account, and carriage—I charge you put down, smother every rising of sensibility. You might as well take a voyage to the North Pole in your shirt, as hope to live comfortably in the world, if endowed with sensibility. Had you been born to a golden pap-spoon, it might have been otherwise; but you, a child of the gutter, the spawn of the highway—you to talk of sensibility—you might as well talk of the family jewels.

Beware of sensibility. If it become morbidly affected, the result is—

But I will narrate to you a history, my son, illustrative of its perils: a true history—true as my hunch. How I came by it, matters not. Suffice it to say, it is as true as the sunbeams.

STEPHEN GLADSTONE—for that shall be his name—in his seventeenth year, was placed at a banker's desk. His gentleness, his almost feminine tenderness of manner, made him the favourite of all who knew him. He was endowed with a most fatal sensibility. His cheeks would redden at the sudden accost of a stranger; and when his employer, as would often happen, spoke in commendation of his labours, the tears would gush from his eyes, and he would tremble from head to foot, like a detected culprit. For three years Stephen remained in the employ of Messrs. ———; and every year, such was his assiduity, such his exemplary conduct, his salary was increased. Already the oldest clerks began to predict that "Stephen Gladstone would soon be a junior partner."

When Stephen had attained his twentieth year, a sudden alteration was visible in his features—his manner. Day by day, he became haggard—careworn. His face was pale and juiceless; and his eyes, ordinarily dull and filmed, would suddenly flash with lustrous brightness. The slightest sound would make him start as at a thunder-crash. His employers speedily noticed the change; and again and again desired Stephen to forego his duties for a month or two, to have change of air and scene; but every such desire seemed to inflict inexpressible torture upon the clerk. He would declare he was very well; if he looked ill, he knew not why he should do so, for he was in excellent health; never—never better. And still day by day he seemed to waste and wither; and day by day the weight upon his spirits grew the heavier.

At length, Stephen's employers resolved to address themselves to a physician; who, having heard their story, managed to obtain what seemed an accidental meeting with the clerk.

"Why, Mr. Gladstone, you are not well. Come, come! I see what this is."

"Indeed, sir, you mistake: I am well—quite well. Surely, sir, I should know best," said Stephen, a little irritated.

"Never tell me," said the physician, whose cordial tone and benevolent manner would have gained the confidence of a misanthrope; I see your case plainly; it's love—nothing but love."

Stephen looked a look of misery in the physician's face, suppressed a groan, and broke from him.

A week elapsed, and Stephen suddenly appeared before the

doctor. His face was distorted with anguish ; he reeled, and fell into a chair ; and sat gasping with the brain's agony. Instantly the physician was at his side—soothing, comforting him.

"I can endure it no longer : you shall know all, doctor,—all, though the hangman be at the door. Listen ! you know not, for these six months, what scorpions have been stinging me. To-day again—this very day—my employers raised my income : they reward me—*me* ! Doctor, look at that hand ! It is a thief's—I tell you it is a thief's ! But I said you should know all. My masters—kind souls ! have praised me for my zeal—have desired me to seek recreation—to absent myself from the house ! Oh, God ! if late and early I was at the desk, it was that my books might escape detection ! And they call this zeal, and they reward me for it—me, who have robbed, have pillaged them ! "

Long and kind was the speech of the physician, who at length charged himself to break the business to the masters of the wretched youth, and with heavy heart departed on his mission. His tale was soon told.

"Ha ! ha ! ha ! Impossible," cried the bankers. "Gladstone embezzle money ! why, he couldn't take a farthing—not a farthing : all his books have been regularly balanced." It was indeed so. His morbid sensibility, worked upon by the possibility of the act, had, in his fantastic terrors, made him a criminal.

"This is a mistake, quite a mistake : " and the physician sought to soothe the mind of the excited clerk.

"Then I am no thief ? " asked Stephen, as if awakened from a horrid trance.

"You've been unwell—nothing more ; a little unwell," said the physician.

The discovery of his innocence was, however, too much for the young man's reason : from that moment it was utterly shattered. The banker's clerk—alas ! poor human nature !—died a maniac.

LETTER XV.

WEALTH AND ITS USES. STORY OF THE SLIPPERS.

"JUST ENOUGH."

ONE of the best and most satisfactory uses of wealth, my dear boy, is to dazzle with our riches the eyes of our neighbours. Your dear mother once hit this point to a nicety. We had long expected the payment of a small legacy bequeathed to her by a distant relation, whose exact degree of kindred I cared not much to inquire into. It was enough for us that your dear mother's name was down in the will; and that the executors promised some day to faithfully perform the injunctions of the dear deceased. "And when we get this money," said your mother to me in a moment of connubial confidence, "I tell you what we'll do with it—I tell you, my love, what we'll do with it." As I knew she would proceed no further until I begged to know her intentions, I at once put the question. "What, my dearest, what will you do with it?" "Why, my love," answered your parent, her eyes sparkling with pleasure, "we'll take the plate out of pawn, and give a party." Yes; the great gratification to be gathered from the legacy was, that we might flash our four tea-spoons and pair of tongs in the eyes of people for whom we had not the slightest esteem; and to one of whom your mother had, I know, on three occasions captiously refused the loan of her bellows.

You will find, as you know more of the world, that your mother's tea-spoons and tongs are, albeit the humble, yet the true representatives of whole buffets of plate. You will possibly find yourself invited to feast with a man who cares not a tittle whether you have a dinner or not; his only object is to show you your envious face in his golden salvers, to make your mouth water with his Dutch fruit pieces; in a word, not to fill your belly with his turtle and venison, but to abase your mind with a prostrating sense of his wealth. He takes possession of your admiration, as a feudal chief receives the homage of his vassal. And this you are to consider the true use—the real dignity of wealth.

There are some enthusiasts—that is, the generous mob of philanthropists with empty pockets—who vow that wealth is only given to the rich in trust for the poor. Whilst you remain a pauper, remain of this religion—when you obtain money, read *your recantation* before Midas.

Philosophers have held that the *aurum potabile*, if taken into the human system, tends to refine mortal clay of its inherent grossness, and by degrees to assimilate the flesh of earthly man to the flesh of the gods. Whether gold be swallowed, or a sufficient quantity of it be merely carried in the pocket, the grateful result is precisely the same. Consider hundreds of the heavy purse-bearers of the world, and tell me if it be otherwise with them. They have the lineaments of men; they are bipeds like the poorest beggar: but their moral and physical systems are so coloured, so permeated with the precious metal, that they are creatures quite apart from the ordinary race of mortals. Do their daily acts betray their affinity with them? Are they not as far above the pauper who quenches his thirst at the brook, as the pauper above the frog he disturbs there?

I think I have heard you say, you love the face of Nature! The open sky—the fields, the trees, the shining river, all are glorious to you! My dear boy, whatever may be your present delight in contemplating these objects, as yet you know nothing of their value. Look upon them with the eye of a proprietor, and what a bloom will come upon the picture! Every bit of turf will be an emerald to you; every grasshopper will chirrup—a very angel to your self-complacency; every tree, moved by the wind, will bow to you as you pass by it; the very fish in the river will

“Show to the sun their wav’d coats dropp’d with gold,”

reflecting there *your* wealth, and not *their* beauty. Nay, that portion of the sky which rains and shines its blessings upon your land, you will behold as yours; yea, human pride, strong in its faith of property, will read upon the face of heaven itself—“*MEUM!*” Every sunbeam will be to you as tangible as if it were an ingot. How delicious and how entrancing must have been the feelings of Adam when he awoke in Eden, to find himself—a landed proprietor!

If you can walk the fields and look upon the sky with these ennobling emotions, then, my son, you will know the real merits—the true uses of wealth. You will then own that it is only the man of money who can worship Nature as she ought to be worshipped; inasmuch as it is only he who can truly estimate her thousand beauties; who can feel his heart rise and glow as he surveys her charms; and, putting his hands in his pockets, can love her with a lover’s tenderness.

This man, rejoicing on his own land, meets something in shape like himself plodding the sod. This two-legged animal envies the squirrel in the wood—the hare he has startled from its form.

he has nothing ; his very hands are useless to him : he is denied a spade to delve with, a plough to guide. Poor wretch ! he is incrustated with ignorance ; covered like a tortoise. What eyes, what thoughts has he for the loveliness of Nature ? Let the gracious gentleman who owns the soil and the pauper encumbering it, sit with him upon two hillocks and discourse on the loveliness of life.

Well, they have talked there three hours ; for see, the sun is blazing in the west. What have you heard from the man or wealth ? Has he not spoken of Nature as a benignant goddess—has he not painted life with the bloom of Paradise still upon it ? His whole speech has been a thanksgiving ! What have you heard from the pauper !—evidence of grossest ignorance.

“ A primrose by a river's brim,
A yellow primrose is to him—
And it is nothing more.”

He looks upon the meads, pranked with a thousand flowers, with a heavy, leaden look ; they are, he says, to him a blank—a nothing.—And for life, he feels it most when it is gnawing at his bowels.

Will you, after this, my son, say that one of the highest uses of wealth is not to quicken our apprehension to the thousand beauties showered about us ? Hence, my child, the inevitable intelligence and superiority of the rich—hence, the gloom and crassitude of the poor. If you love nature, you must obtain wealth for the true—the lawful enjoyment of her. You must wed her with a golden ring.

Having obtained wealth, you are only to consider your own gratification in its outlay. There are foolish people who stint their appetites of many pleasant fillips, that when the worm is wriggling in their shrouds their thankful children may be sure of dinners. Leave your children to shift for themselves—Destitution is a fine whetstone to ingenuity.

In the course of my travels, I once entered a church in Amsterdam. I was attracted to a monument by a pair of slippers, cut in marble ; and underneath was written, as I was told, in Flemish,—

“ JUST ENOUGH.”

I found upon inquiry that this was the monument of a wise, rich man, who resolved to make his living appetites the tomb of his wealth ; and so nicely adjusted his outlay, that when he died nought was left of his magnificent fortune but his pair of old *slippers*. “ *It is just enough,*” he said, and expired.

There are rich men who live and die in the spirit of the Flemish spendthrift: for to them, this world—and this world only is—"JUST ENOUGH."

LETTER XVI.

HOW TO CHOOSE A FRIEND: THE PURPOSES OF FRIENDSHIP. A STORY OF "FRIENDS."

MY DEAR BOY,—Choose your friend as you would choose an orange; for his golden outside, and the promise of yielding much, when well squeezed.

Lord Chesterfield has beautifully and truly remarked: "what-ever is worth *doing* at all, is worth *doing well*." This axiom applies admirably to the treatment of a friend.

There is no surer evidence of a contented meanness of spirit in a young man, than a disposition to club a friendship with merely his equals in life: whilst, on the other hand, the ardent, speculative mind, that, looking abroad for a communion of feeling, selects his Pylades from the rich and powerful, indicates a just knowledge of the whole and sole purposes of human friendship. What is its object? Is it not to succour and assist the man elected for its twin brother? And how are you, poor and powerless, to expect aid and practical consolation from one as helpless as yourself? Can the naked clothe the naked? Can the beggar bestow alms upon the beggar? No; be assured of this truth; it is to defeat the purpose of all friendship, it is to frustrate its most beneficent and humanising end, to ally yourself with any companion, who cannot better your fortunes: to whom you cannot on all occasions resort, either for the interest of his word, or for what must be indisputably acceded to be the purest, the noblest offering of the human soul,—ready money.

For a poor man to boast of a poor man for his friend, is to flourish in the face of the world an empty purse. To such a man a poor friend is a clog, an incumbrance; a reduplication of his own wants; an exaggeration of his own squalor. What should Lazarus do but burden Lazarus? To enter into such a compact is to make friendship a bubble—the echo of a name—an empty sound!

How different your condition with Gloriosus for your friend! The jewel on your finger is a brilliant evidence of the value of friendship. The horse you sometimes ride proves to yourself and

all the world that amity is a substantial matter ; the burgundy that at Gloriusus's table beams in your eyes, and circulates in your system, makes your bosom glow with the sweetest feelings ; and you lay your hand upon your heart, and feel friendship to be a lovely, a most sufficing thing ! Thus, you build an altar to friendship in your very self. You are a breathing, moving, satin-cheeked evidence that friendship is not, what cynics and misanthropes call it, a thing of air—the dream of fools.

Can you do this if you hang upon the skirts of your fellow-poor ? No, my son. Therefore, if you have a nature capable of friendship,—if you would prove to the world the surpassing beauties of the feeling which poets have sung, and sages melodiously discoursed of,—hang on the rich, select the man of wealth, and him only for your friend ; dwell and glitter in his bosom like his diamond shirt-stud.

Possibly there may be ill-mannered people who for this will call you a toad-eater. Let them : I will in few words, and from truthful history, teach you how to answer them.

The ill-natured antiquaries of the Netherlands, with bile against the politest nation upon earth—of course, I mean the French—have declared that what are now quartered as the lilies of France, were originally toads. The Abbé Dubos gives a reasonable excuse for this ; an excuse that ought to disarm malignity of its sneer : the French could not help it. The Germanic nations—the French then being a part of them—having engaged all the courageous and terrible birds and beasts, such as eagles, lions, griffins, dragons, and the like, left nothing whatever for the poor Franks ; who were therefore compelled to go to the puddles for their bearings, and so contented themselves with a toad. This toad, in process of time, became metamorphosed into a bee, for on the 27th of May, 1655, the Curé of St. Brie, at Tournay, wishing to enlarge his wine-cellar, the workmen he had employed upon that benevolent object, came plump upon the coffin of King Childeric I. It was then discovered that upon his Majesty's royal robe were sewed innumerable golden bees. These were subsequently removed to the royal cabinet of France. Whether, however, they took flight at the revolution, I know not. " I do not doubt," says the Abbé Dubos, " that our *bees*, by the ignorance of painters and sculptors, have become *lilies*." Lilies, that, according to Malherbe, were once especially fragrant in the nostrils of John Bull.

" A leur odeur l'Anglais se relâchant,
Notre amitié va recherchant.
Et l'Espagnol, prodige merveilleux,
Cesse d'être orgueilleux."

You may ask me, my son, what has this antiquarian rigmarole about the toads, the bees, and the lilies of France, to do with the lesson I would propound on the beauty of friendship? My son, be instructed.

Let the envious call you toad-eater; make you of that toad a golden bee, still gathering honey from your friend, and turning it to your private advantage. And then, if detraction accuse you of hoarding from the treasures of your Pylades, declare your friendship to have no bee-like propensity whatever, but that it grows in your heart, pure and odorous as—

“The lily, lady of the flowering field.”

Thus, when the world throws the toad in your face, take a lesson of the Frenchmen, and declare there was never aught toad-like in the matter; but always, always a lily! Toads you never eat; you only snuff lilies.

Friendship, like love, may, I know, have very odd beginnings. I speak, however, of the friendship of simpletons and penniless enthusiasts. I will narrate to you what I think a very comical incident, illustrative of the mysterious working of friendship.

Lieutenant Montgomery had seen much military service. However, the wars were over, and he had nought to do, but to lounge as best he could through life upon half-pay. He was one day taking his ease at his tavern, when he observed a stranger, evidently a foreigner, gazing intently at him. The lieutenant appeared not to notice the intrusion, but shifted his position. A short time, and the stranger shifted too, and still with unblenched gaze he stared. This was too much for Montgomery, who rose and approached his scrutinising intruder.

“Do you know me, sir?” asked the lieutenant.

“I think I do,” answered the foreigner. He was a Frenchman.

“Have we ever met before?” continued Montgomery.

“I will not swear for it; but if we have—and I am almost sure we have,” said the stranger, “you have a sabre cut, a deep one, on your right wrist.”

“I have,” cried Montgomery, turning back his sleeve, and displaying a very broad and ugly scar. “I didn’t get this for nothing, for the brave fellow who made me a present of it, I repaid with a gash across the skull.”

The Frenchman bent down his head, parted his hair with his hands, and said—“You did: you may look at the receipt.”

The next moment they were in each other’s arms. They became bosom friends for life.

LETTER XVII.

ON POLITICAL FLATTERY.—THE SKULL GOBLET.

ONE Gemelli Carreri, a travelled Italian, has preserved the following story. Ponder on it, my son; for, duly considered, 'twill be found to enshrine the noblest worldly wisdom.

You have doubtless heard of Shah-Abas, called the Great? If not, it is no matter. A good story is just as good, and what may seem strange to your unripe reflection, *is just as true*, whether the hero of it ever lived or not. To the philosophic mind, Tom Thumb is as real a thing as Alexander. The wise man is as well taught by a shadow, as by Cæsar at the head of his legions.—However, to get back to Shah-Abas. He was a great man, for he killed a certain king of the Usbecks; and having killed him, did not ingloriously thrust all his carcass into a hole, but preserved the royal skull from worms and darkness, and made it the companion of his carousals and his merry nights. Briefly, the great Shah-Abas had the king's skull set in gold, for a drinking cup. Well had it been for the world, had all kingly skulls been ever as socially employed! The Shah died; and for what we know, had a merry laugh in the shades with the king of the Usbecks, when he met and told him of the late hours his skull still kept on the earth, of the wine that sparkled in it, or the free talk that passed about it, of the jokes that were cracked, of the songs that were chirruped! The Shah's descendant much treasured the skull; and feeling death to be the great teacher, never slept, without taking copious advice from the king of the Usbecks. It happened that the Usbeck people sent an ambassador to the Shah's descendant, to permit and ratify a treaty of commerce. In those days, commercial principles were in the bud; and therefore, the prejudice of the Usbecks is not to be considered in the strong light of present wisdom. The Usbecks prayed that they might be permitted to export their fleas free of duty into the realm of the Shah; offering as an equivalent, to admit the Shah's blue-bottle flies on the same enlightened footing. The question, as you may conceive, was of great national importance: many of the oldest Usbecks declaring they were a lost folk from the moment they admitted blue-bottles duty free: whilst some of the Shah's people maintained the exclusive privilege of their fleas, as though they were creatures of their own flesh; and loudly clamoured for stringent restrictions, for the sharpest scrutiny. Every Usbeck should be

searched to the skin, to prevent the smuggling of fleas: whilst the Usbecks, firing at this, threatened to throw up a line of observatories on the frontiers to prevent the entry of a single blue-bottle into their kingdom. The Shah's people were not behindhand; for albeit they had all along admitted the Usbecks' sheep, they prayed the Shah that he would henceforth have every beast shaved bare as his hand, fleas having been known—it had been proved upon committee—to be conveyed into the kingdom by means of the wool. The people also called for an army of inspection on the annual flight of the swallows from the Usbecks to the country of the Shah: they, too, had brought fleas into the country, to the manifest injury of the home-breeder.

Matters were at the height, when the Shah gave a handsome banquet to the ambassador of the Usbecks. In the midst of the iollity, the Shah called, in the irony of his heart, for the loving-cup. The cup-bearer approached, and on bended knee presented the skull of the Usbeck king; the ambassador started at the indignity; and felt a nervous contraction of his fingers that suddenly seemed to hunger for the handle of his scimeter. Another second, and he had certainly made a cut at the throat of the Shah, when his eye falling on the goblet-skull of his late revered monarch, he thought he saw the bony cavity, wherein was wont to roll and flash the burning eye of fiery despotism, quickly and most significantly contract as with a wink, and the jaw-bone slightly move, as much as to look and say—"Don't make a noodle of yourself." Happily, too, at the same moment, the Usbeck ambassador felt the fleas of his native country close at his bosom. The ambassador smiled.

"What think you of the goblet?" asked the Shah, with a very ungentlemanly leer.

"I think," said the ambassador, "my monarch was most happy, most honoured, in falling by the hands of a great king: but he is still happier, still more honoured, in having his skull preserved by a greater."

The king was mollified: from that moment the Usbeck fleas hopped without any fiscal restriction into the Shah's dominions, and the blue-bottles of the Shah, without let or hindrance on the part of custom-house mercenaries, sang their household music in the parlours of the Usbecks, and in their hospital larders made provisions for their oviparous little ones.

I trust, my son, you can apply the moral of this voracious story? If the ambassador had given vent to his rising imagination—if on the introduction of the royal skull, he had delivered himself of some red-hot sentence or two,—why, the anti-flea-law bigots had triumphed. Until this day, perhaps, fleas had been

smuggled into the lands of the Shah ; and blue-bottles, save as pets for the rich, been unknown in the land of the Usbecks. But the ambassador rightly taking the wink from the royal skull, the lowest subject of the Shah has the luxury of fleas ; whilst fly-blown mutton—allowing he can get mutton at all—is within the reach of the meanest Usbeck.

Here, my son, you perceive the beauty, the utility of political flattery ! If Fortune, determining to show a great example to men, resolve to make you a cabinet minister, engrave this story on your heart. Never do any political act by straightforward means. Always go round about your purpose. And for this reason ; straightforward honesty is the last resource of a fool—mere honesty is the white chicken's feather in the cap of the simpleton.

You were six years old when I took you to see my friend Mr. Polito's elephant, and gave you a halfpenny. With a nascent generosity, which nearly brought tears to my paternal eyes, you flung down the copper coin at the feet of the majestic animal. Remember you not your first wonder, when the elephant took the halfpenny up ? What a curve he gave his trunk ! How many bendings and turnings he employed ere he placed the halfpenny cake, purchased with Christian-like sagacity of the tradesman near his den, in his capacious mouth ! The same action employed by that elephant to pick up a halfpenny, would be applied to the tearing up of the forest plane. My son, the elephant is a practical politician : remember him, and if you get exalted, do nothing great or small unless you do it with a twist.

As the remainder of the sheet is not sufficient for us to discuss a new subject, let me fill up the blank that remains with a few thoughts on the drinking goblet of the Shah. In the matter of kings, you must acknowledge, from what I narrated, that their influence passes not from the earth with their death. Though they are nothing, for good or ill, their skulls—so to speak—remain. What a great lesson does Napoleon offer to those Frenchmen who every morning wash themselves ! Understand me.

The French are, above all nations of the earth, a people of practical wisdom—of practical morality. They make the glory of their great men a household thing.

Napoleon is on his death-bed, his eagles flee upon their golden wings to darkness—the trumpet wails in his ear—the last flutter of his heart rises with the muttering drum—and “*tête d'armée !*” is his death-sob. Napoleon is dead. A few minutes—the plaster is poured above the face of imperial clay, and posterity is insured the *vera effigies* of that thunderbolt of a man, just as the bolt was spent.

Now that face, in its dreadful calmness, is multiplied in silver—in bronze—in marble—in richest metal and in purest stone ! And now, to teach a daily lesson to the common mind, that awful countenance, with the weight of death upon it, is sold modelled in—soap !

Thus, have we not moral reflections brought to the very fingers' ends of the people ? As the mechanic cleanses his palms, and feels his emperor's nose wasting away in his fingers, he thinks of Marengo and Austerlitz ! With the imperial face the pickpocket makes his hands clean from last night's work, thinking the while of the rifled halls and galleries of Italy : the butcher, new from his morning's killing, washes his hands with the countenance of the emperor, the while he muses on Waterloo, and whistles the "Downfall of Paris :—" and the philosopher peeps into the tub, and sees the type and memory of the warrior's deeds in bubbles floating upon dirty water.

LETTER XVIII.

ON SOCIAL FLATTERY : STORY OF THE DOG PONTO—FIG AND PRUNE SAUCE.

MY DEAR SON,—Having in my last dwelt upon flattery, as necessary to the success of a politician, I dedicate this letter to a consideration of its utility to every man who would, by the exercise of his wits, make his way in the world. There is a negative flattery, as there is a positive flattery. A knowledge of the one is equally vital with the practice of the other. For instance :—You would conciliate the good graces of a man of wealth or interest ? You hang and flutter about him for the bounty of his purse, or the magic of his good word in high places. This man may be a fool : I do not, understand me, fall in with the vulgar cry of paupers, that every man who is born rich is therefore born brainless ; but your patron, or the man you would make your patron, may be a fool ; and, consequently, is the more frequently tempted, like the climbing ape, to show his natural destitution. I think it is Mr. Addison who says, "He who is injured, and having brought his enemy on his knees, declines to punish him, was born for a conqueror." This is the sentiment, though not perhaps the exact words ; for I have long since put aside *The Spectator* with your mother's cracked china. Mark my son, a higher, a severer test of magnanimity. He who hears the

abortive jest of a rich fool, yet refuses to turn his folly inside out, is born to finger ready money. This, my son, is flattery by negative. Have what wit you will, but carry it—as courtiers carry their swords in the royal presence—in the scabbard. Suffer your patron to run you, as he thinks, through and through with his wooden dagger of a joke; but never let yourself be tempted to draw. Flattery has its martyrdom, the same as religion—and this is of it. Bear all the wounds inflicted upon you by wealth with a merry face; join in the laugh that's raised against you; but as you value success in life, never show an inch of steel in self-defence. Men who do otherwise may be chronicled for brave, expert wits; but they die beggars.

Come we now to positive flattery. Whatever dirty-shirted philosophers may say to the contrary, flattery is a fine social thing; the beautiful handmaid of life, casting flowers and odoriferous herbs in the paths of men, who, crushing out the sweets, curl up their noses as they snuff the odour, and walk half an inch higher to heaven by what they tread upon.

Your patron is an ass: you hear his braying—you see his ears: *asinus* is written all over him in Nature's boldest round-hand. Well, by delicately dwelling upon the melodious wisdom of his words—by adroitly touching on the intellectual beauty with which fate has endowed him, you make him for the time love wisdom because he thinks it a part of himself—you draw his admiration towards the expression of the intellectual every time he looks in a mirror. You are thus, in an indirect way, serving the cause of wisdom and intellect by juggling a fool into a worshipper. Let it be granted, that you have your reward for this—that, in fact, you undertake the labour for the wages of life: what of it? Is not the task worthy of payment? When men, in the highest places too, are so well paid for fooling common sense, shall there be no fee for him who elevates a nincompoop?

You see an ass browsing upon thistles. On this you fall into raptures at his exquisite taste for roses; the ass, with great complacency, avers that he always had a peculiar relish for them. The ass brays. Whereupon you make a happy allusion to the vibrations of the Æolian harp. The ass declares it is an instrument above all others he is most inclined to. Are not roses and Æolian harps thus honoured, even by the hypocrisy of admiration?

Believe whatever the rich and powerful say; that is, seem to believe it. Albeit they narrate histories wilder than ever Ariosto fabled, averring themselves to have been eye and ear witnesses to what they tell, yet, without a smile upon your face, gulp it all.

Though the stories be long and nauseous as tape-worms, yet swallow them as though they were delicate as macaroni. You recollect Sir Peter Bullhead? He owed all his fortune to a dog. I will tell you the story.

In early life, Sir Peter became footboy to Lord Tamarind; a man who returned from the East Indies with a million of money, and his liver no bigger than the roasted liver of a capon. Lord Tamarind was a liar of the very finest courage. There was no story he would not undertake, and make his own. Had he resolved upon it, he would have been present at the siege of Troy, and more, have shown you the knee-buckles he had, in single combat, won of Nestor.

Lord Tamarind had a favourite story of a dog: which story he would drag in upon all occasions. His Lordship, go where he would, never went without his dog. "Very curious, indeed, very; and talking of that, reminds me of an extraordinary anecdote of a dog. You never heard it, I know; a remarkable case of conscience,—very remarkable;" and then his Lordship proceeded—his hearers meekly resigning themselves to the too familiar tale.

"You must know that in Batavia—it was when I was there—there was a certain Dutch merchant; I mention no names, for I respect his family. Well, this merchant—a shocking thing!—he was a married man: sweet little woman—five or seven children, and all that. Well, this merchant—very dreadful!—kept a mistress, country-house, and all things proper. Well, every evening he used to leave his lawful home to pass an hour or two with the fatal syren. He had a dog, a faithful, humble dog, that always followed him;—that was, moreover, greatly petted by the illegal enchantress. The dog, being particularly fond of his lawful mistress, became, day by day, very melancholy, sad, heavy-eyed and moping.* Then arose suspicions of hydrophobia—talk of poison, double-barrelled gun, and all that. Still the

* The sagacity of Ponto is nothing to the sensibility of the race of King Charles's spaniels, that ever since the martyrdom of Charles the First have betrayed an inconsolable melancholy. The spaniels lost their liveliness when Charles lost his head. We take this assurance from a French author. In the *Journal des Chasseurs, ou Sporting Magazine Français*, for March 1842, will be found the story as related by the Comte de St. P.—The Count in the autumn of 1841, is shooting with a spaniel, when he falls in with an Englishman, who enlarges in this way (as told by the Count) on the merits of spaniels generally:—

"'Ce sont des quêteurs infatigables', me dit-il; 'excellens pour les fourrés, dont ils fouillent les moindres buissons: nous les employons beaucoup en Angleterre, où le prix de tel individu est, suivant sa généalogie, fort élevé. Il n'y a qu'un seul reproche à leur faire;' mais, ajoute-il, 'ce défaut s'applique malheureusement à l'espèce entière.'

dog followed his master on his evening call. One evening, however—all day long it had been remarked that Ponto was more than usually meditative—the dog paused at the Dalilah's door. 'Ponto, Ponto,' cried the merchant, gaily entering the abode of wickedness, and whistling his dog to follow him—'Ponto, Ponto!'—But the dog stood with his fore-feet on the door-step, and wouldn't budge. 'Ponto, Ponto—sweet Ponto—good Ponto,' cried the wicked woman herself, coming to the door, and offering from her white hand the whitest cake. Ponto was immovable. Then looking at his master, the dog shook his head four or five times, as much as to say, 'Ar'n't you ashamed of yourself?'—signed very deeply, and dropping his tail, walked solemnly home. The merchant was so affected by the dog's reproof,—(all this happened while I was in Batavia,) that he followed Ponto back to his lawful hearth, and for the rest of his natural life was never known to make an evening call again."

Lord Tamarind had three nephews; he cut every one off with a shilling for having boisterously expressed a doubt of the truth of what had occurred whilst he was in Batavia; but Peter Bull-head, who never failed to ask for the story of the dog—Peter, who had risen from footboy to his Lordship's secretary—inherited all the personal property of the Eastern story-teller. My son, every rich man has some sort of Ponto.

There will be occasions when it may be necessary for you to use considerable address. You must not flatter one at the expense of another; that is, when you have equal hopes of each. A friend of mine, who had lived all his life at court, told me a story that will illustrate what I mean. It happened that the king and queen were in the garden, and some of the courtiers with them. My friend was called by the king. Now it happened that their majesties were so placed that my friend could not go to the king without turning his back—an act at court only little less than high treason—upon the queen. Here was a dilemma! "And how did you get out of the scrape?" I asked my friend. "In this way," he answered, "*I walked sideways.*" I have known many men in life get to the golden gate of fortune by walking every inch of the path—sideways.

In your flattery of mankind, you must also discriminate character, lest you throw away a valuable commodity. I have known men so unprincipled, that they have received the incense

—'Et quel est-il?' demandai-je à mon interlocuteur.

—'ILS SONT TRISTES'—reprit gravement celui-ci—'DEPUIS LA MORT DU ROI CHARLES!'"

—(Upon this the Count observes, as well he may)—

"Superstition naïve et touchante!"

of adulation half their lives, and, dying, have left the man who burnt his myrrh and frankincense for them, nothing in reward but a miserable jest in the codicil.

There was my poor friend Sniffton. He hated pig and prune-sauce as he hated a poor relative. Nevertheless, for twenty years did he consent to eat it at his uncle's table; nor could he find words rich enough wherewith to do honour to uncle's pig and prune-sauce. Uncle died. "Thank heaven!" cried Sniffton, "I shall now receive my reward in hard cash for my sacrifice to that damned pig and prune-sauce." The will was read, and thus was Sniffton rewarded:

"And I hereby give and bequeath to my dearly-beloved nephew, Peter Sniffton, in consideration of his peculiar love of my pig and prune-sauce, the whole and sole—recipe whereby he may cook it."

My son, be wary, and avoid such wretches.

LETTER XIX.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF DRUNKENNESS: THE GENIUS OF THE CORK.

MY DEAR BOY,—I know few things that tell so fatally against a young man, when entering the world, as a weak stomach. I therefore most earnestly entreat you to fortify it by every means that may present themselves. It is true, that the increasing effeminacy of the world requires of the ingenuous youth a less capacity for the bottle than when I was young; nevertheless, there are occasions, when a man's previous habits and education will be tested by vintner's measure. Can there be anything more disgusting than to see a young man after, say, the third bottle, in a state of maudlin drunkenness? What tricks he perpetrates! How he lets all the world peep through the loop-holes of his soul; and how they who spy, grin at him and chuckle over the exhibition! What, too, is the end of this? I have known an otherwise promising young fellow so forget himself, as to render back in the most ungracious manner the hospitality of the host, who—suppressing his indignation by contempt—has ordered the servants to take off the gentleman's cravat, and lay him upon the mat for recovery. Then what running to and fro for vinegar—what wet towels for the temples—what hints, in desperate cases, of the lancet—until at length the wretched victim rolls from side to side, and gargles his throat with—"Better—

better—m-uch better!" This is not only disgusting,—it is unprofitable.

No, my son ; never get drunk—that is, in company,—above the girdle. There is a thermometer of drunkenness which every wise young man who has to elbow his way through the world would do well to consider. A man may be knee-drunk—hip-drunk—shoulder-drunk—nay, chin-drunk ; but the wine should be allowed to rise no higher. Then he sits with a fine fluency of speech—his countenance brightened, his wit irradiated by what he has swallowed. And, perhaps, there is no situation in mortal life which so magnificently vindicates the ethereal nature of man, as that which presents him to us triumphing with rosy face above the mists and clouds of wine that roll around him ! He is like the peak described by the poet : although vapours obscure him midway—

" Eternal sunshine settles on his head."

There he sits ! His toes, it is true, may be of clay—but his head is of lustrous gold. Like the oracles of the ancient day, he speaks wisdom through the clouds that circle him !

My son, by all means labour to arrive at this blessed, this most profitable condition. Then, though you stumble a little on going away, your stumbling will never be seen ; for the potency of your head and stomach has survived the observation of your co-drinkers ; and thus, though you are helped to your hackney-coach, a wine-skin, a very Silenus up to the shoulders, you have the unclouded head of Socrates to adorn them ! How many a worthy gentleman lives and dies with an undeniable character for sobriety, from only having kept his head above the port ! A character is to be saved like a life, by merely keeping the chin above the fluid it swims in.

To obtain this power requires, I allow it, great practice : therefore, as a scholar, make your bottle your private companion. Take your liquor, as you would take your book, in profoundest solitude. "Try conclusions" with yourself in your own garret, that you may achieve victories in other men's dining-rooms.

I know that shallow, inexperienced moralists declaim against what they are pleased to call the vice of solitary drinking. Why, there is no such thing. A man can no more drink alone, than he can drink without his shadow.

Pop ! There—the cork's drawn. *Gurgle—gurgle—gurgle—good—good—good*—No ! it is in vain ; there is no type—there are no printed sounds (allow me the *concerto*)—to describe the melody, the cadence of the out-pouring bottle. Well, the bottle

has rendered its virgin soul. You have resolved to sate yourself upon its sweetness. You think yourself alone. Oh, the vanity of ignorance! Why, the cork of what is called a solitary drinker, drawn from the bottle, is an audible charm that calls up a spirit—(angel or devil, according to contending moralists)—to come and sit with the toper. You have, therefore, only to retire with a full bottle to your own garret to be sure of company—and of the most profitable sort too; for your companion carries away no drop of your liquor; but there he sits with a jocund, leering look, on that three-legged stool; and there he tells stories to you—and sings to your rapturous spirit—and now hangs your white-washed walls with Sidonian tapestries—and now fills your gaping pockets with ideal gold!

What a world are you in! How your heart grows and grows! How, with frantic benevolence you rend aside your waistcoat (how you'll hunt for the two dropt buttons in the morning!) to give the creature room for its uttermost expansion! What a figure you resolve to make in the world! What woman—nay, what women—you will marry! Now, you are gathering roses with dallying hours,—and now (with old Ronsard)—

“*Peschant ne sçay quelles pierres,
Au bord de l'Indique mer!*”

And whilst you take your flight here and there, how the spirit evoked by the cork hugs himself, and grins at you!

It is by such discipline, my son, that you will be enabled when in society to maintain the look and something of the reasoning powers of a man, when your whole carcass is throbbing with alcohol. You will also find a bottle the handmaid (bottles are, evidently, feminine) of philosophy. After every night's good set in with the genius of the cork, you will be the better able to judge of the true value of all worldly endowments. You will also have a finer, a deeper, a more enlarged comprehension of the weakness of human nature. If, before, you were not sufficiently impressed with the utility of money, you will, shortly after every visit of the genius of the cork, know its increasing beauty. It may be, too, you have not paid sufficient attention to that wondrous machinery—that complex simplicity of the human animal,—that you have not essentially considered your immortal essence to be what it really is—

“*A soul, hung up as 'twere in chains,
Of nerves, and arteries, and veins!*”

This inattention will be remedied—this ignorance informed—by frequent appeals to the bottle. You will, in a short time,

acknowledge the exquisite sensibility of the nerves ; for you shall not be able to lift your morning tea-cup without marvelling at the wondrous machinery vibrating before you. And the tongue, too,—that delicate instrument of silver sound,—that shall lie like dry dirt in your mouth, heavy, hot, and voiceless ! And from this you will learn and feel that man is clay, and be at once raised and humbled by the knowledge.

Depend upon it, the bottle is the spring, the true source of all human inspiration—the fountain from which all philosophers, all sages, have drunk their best wisdom.

What would have been Newton without a bottle ? Do you think he would ever have made his grand discovery unless he had dined first ? Sitting in his orchard he saw an apple fall, (what a part have apples played in human history !) and as it fell it *turned and turned*. Do you imagine that Newton would have been so delicately susceptible of the turning of a pippin, if he had not that day drawn a cork ? Struck with the nascent idea, he called for another bottle,—and then for another ; and when the philosopher had pondered upon the apple, had worked his analogies, and had drunk a third bottle,—he was convinced, that not only had the apple spun as it fell, but that the whole world turned round. If you would prove the centre of gravity—get drunk.

My son, in conclusion, it is well to drink from your own bottle ; but it is still better to drink from another man's.

LETTER XX.

ON THE PHILOSOPHY OF GAMING.

MY DEAR SON,—You will, I trust, after these many fond and anxious epistles, look upon all men as divided into two classes—the men who eat men, and the men who are eaten. With this conviction, it will, I hope, be your determination always to obtain a good sufficing bellyful of your fellow creatures ; and never to contribute in your own person a single mouthful to the banquet of the anthropophagi.

It is a vulgar mistake, the very crassitude of ignorance, to look upon only those men as man-eaters, who dispatch their victims with a club or tomahawk, and lighting the festive fire make their own man an honourable tomb for their enemies. This *mode of eating* only distinguishes the savage from his more

refined brother, who disguises and sophisticates his cookery, and by the aid of certain social sauce, makes even himself forgetful of the horror which—to use the cook's phrase—is the *stock* of the feast.

In your boyhood, you were, I know, a most active taker of birds' nests. It was your delight to possess yourself of the eggs, ere the process of incubation had commenced, and having very adroitly sucked out the contents, you would thread the mere shell on a piece of grass, as a trophy of your success and good fortune. My dear boy, it is quite possible—indeed, it is every day accomplished—to treat the substance of men, as you have treated the eggs of larks and sparrows. How many successful egg-suckers could I point out to you, who applying the thousand means with which law and social chicanery supply every man, wise and adroit enough to use them, have so sucked and sucked that they have left nothing but the mere outside—the fragile shells of men! There is my old acquaintance, Barabbas Moses, with his sixty in a hundred. Twenty years ago he lived by putting off pencils, with apocryphal lead in them. How has he grown thus rich—how has he become thus treble-gilt? My son, he has been a most enterprising egg-sucker. How many birds of fine feather has he destroyed in the egg—how many shells of men might he wear about him! It is a poor thing to scalp a man; a coarse, rough, operation: but to feast upon his vitals, nay, to abstract his very marrow from him, to leave no blood-mark there, yet leave him with sufficient vitality to crawl about and look like a man, that, my son, is the master-piece of civilisation, the genius of refined life.

There is, however, a more open, a more generous mode of living upon men; a mode, dignified by fashion, exalted by authority—I mean gaming.

The gamester is, indeed, a privileged person; a creature, who merges all the petty, wearying anxieties of life into one sublime passion. Become a gamester, and you are fortified, nay, exempt from the assaults of divers other feelings that distract and worry less happy men. Gaming is a moral Aaron's rod, and swallows up all meaner passions.

Consider, my son, the vigilance, the self-concentration, the judgment, the quickness of wit, and at times, the dexterity of finger, necessary to a successful gamester; and you will look upon the character with still-increasing veneration. Did you ever know a gamester fall madly in love? Did you ever know him, if a married man, waste his profitable time, his profitable thoughts, upon the woman he has buckled himself to? If he be a father, what is the laughter of his children to the melody of

the dice? What, human hearts to the ace and king of the same suit, when trumps? He is exalted far above the weakening influences that pull down other men, and from his elevation looks with a cold eye of dignity upon the pettiness of human affections. You will hear other men rave about the beauties of nature; of hill and dale, mountain and flood. To the gamester, how small the space that bounds his imagination—but then how rich, how fertile—those half-dozen yards of bright green cloth!

You will hear men talk about the sweets of industry; of the dignity of labour; the more especially those men who never yet set their foot to a spade, or their hand to a plough. The sweets of industry! what are they to the sweets of fortune? And for the dignity of labour, give me, say I, the dignity of luck!

Observe what is called the industrious man. Mark his daily martyrdom. He rises early; breakfasts lightly; hurries off with his bread-and-butter yet undigested to his labour. He toils his eight, ten, nay twelve hours; comes home; eats his crust; and with hardly strength remaining to take off his stockings, slinks wearied to bed. In a brief time—how very brief!—the cock crows, and the industrious man has serious thoughts of shaving: again he is up—again has he bolted his morning meal,—and again is he out to go over the drudgery of how many thousand yesterdays! The year's wound up; and for all this toil, this anxiety, this daily crucifixion of spirit, the industrious man counts one—two—shall we say three hundred golden pieces? For all this tedious misery—three hundred pounds!

My son, turn your eyes to the gamester. He rises when he likes—dallies, at “his own sweet will,” with his breakfast. He then lounges away the hours, pleasantly meditating on the coming night. He enters the arena. With what a graceful assurance doth he take the box in his hand. One—two—three; he throws sixes, and pockets five hundred pounds! What a miserable, felon, outcast sneak-up does your industrious man appear after this! What a poor sweating slave! Whilst on the other hand, what an air of power is about the gamester! What a glory—what a magic! He inherits in one minute, by the potent shake of his elbow, all that poor, sordid labour wears its back into a hoop for—its eyes into blindness! Will you, after this, ever dream of becoming that miserable negative—an industrious man? Depend upon it, the true jewels of life—rightly worn—are the four aces. Hope has been vulgarly pictured with an anchor. Let your hope carry a dice-box!

As for luck, you may nearly always ensure that, if you properly educate your perceptions, and your fingers. Cultivate

your thumb-nails, my dear boy ; the smallest sacrifice to the personal graces is not lost upon the gamester.

But I will take the worst side of the picture. You are doomed to be unlucky—you are fated always to lose. You have no genius—like the genius of Socrates, that always popped into its master's hand the very trump required—to aid and abet you. The world turns its back on you ; and neither by cards nor dice can you fob your brother mortal out of a single guinea. Debts come in like the waves about you : you have no home—no abiding place ! This is the moment, my son, for you to exercise the most heroic of virtues. There is cord—there is steel—there are silver rivers. If you cannot live, you can die ; and dying you will have this consolation : if you have steadily and inexorably vindicated the character of a gamester, your death will inflict no pang upon a single creature left behind you ; and you will have the pleasing consolation to reflect that you never did the world a greater service than when you quitted it.

LETTER XXI.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF GLORY : THE SWORD AND THE GOSLINGS.

MY DEAR BOY,—I hoped that, long ere this, your hankering passion after what is called glory, had died a natural death ; and that you had begun to consider glory at the best but as a dull mountebank—a thing of strut, and frippery, and emptiness. When St. Austin was a little boy, he and his mother went on a day's pleasure with a certain Roman prætor, to pay their respects to the tomb of Cæsar. St. Austin has handed down to us the following lively portrait of the imperial corpse. "It looked of a blue mould ; the bone of the nose laid bare ; the flesh of the nether lip quite fallen off ; his mouth full of worms ; and in his eye-pit a hungry toad, feasting upon the remnant portion of flesh and moisture ; and so," moralises the saint, "he dwelt in his house of darkness." He did no such thing ; he had vacated his dwelling. Death had written on the corpse "This house to let," and the worms and the toad became the tenants. Well, and what had they to do with Cæsar ? What had the "blue mouldy flesh" and the "nose laid bare" to do with Cæsar dead, more than the paring of Cæsar's nails with Cæsar living ? Is the evil fame that may be flung upon a house, to attach to a previous occupant ? Our maiden queen Elizabeth made sundry

progresses ; honoured sundry mansions with her night-cap. What, if in lapse of time, one of these houses should have so fallen in reputation, that its after iniquity has been published by candle and paper lanthorn ? Does the evil fame of the house taint or soil the ermine fame of our spotless Elizabeth ?

One Jeremy Taylor, who can occasionally twine death's-heads with rose-buds, and strew a coffin with spices, tells us a story of a fair young German gentleman who, though much importuned by many young ladies to sit for his portrait, would never consent. (So far he was right ; for if there be a plague upon earth, it is the plague of sitting under a continual struggle to call into your face and keep there your very prettiest and most amiable look, until duly fastened by pigments, upon wainscot or canvas.) The fair young Herr, however, made at last a compromise. He, in the handsomest manner, consented to sit for his portrait after a few days' burial, upon the honourable understanding that the painter, visiting the vault, should limn the corpse just as it appeared ; giving no cheek "a little red," putting no complimentary dimple in the chin, but painting death to the life. The painter was sent upon his mission, and found his sitter with "his face half eaten, and his midriff and backbone full of serpents ; and so he stands pictured among his armed ancestors." And a very foolish figure he must cut among such goodly company.

Fear not, my son ; I am not about to clap in with shallow moralists who would show the nothingness of glory, by showing that which is, indeed, no part of it ; who would put the living Cæsar's nose out of joint by displaying his nose "laid bare" in his coffin ; who would prove that it was a vanity of vanities, to paint a fair young German whilst *in the flesh*, because, when he took his departure from it, and was no longer in any way answerable for any disgrace it might fall into—serpents might gender there. Let us follow out this philosophy.

The Germans, as you know, are a nation of cabbage-eaters. They sophisticate good wholesome worts with vinegar, and Beelzebub alone, who supplies some nations with cooks, knows what beside. This vegetable wickedness they call *sauer kraut*. Now, let us imagine the immediate descendant of the fair-haired young German, with his napkin tucked under his chin, about to plunge his fist into the dish. He pauses—looks serious—a tear steals into the corner of his eye : solemnly removing the napkin from his button-hole, he rises, and remembering that the churchyard wherein his ancestor was decently deposited, has been converted into a vegetable garden, he points to the *sauer kraut*, and exclaims,—“Behold the vanity of all earthly things ;

the particles of our beloved ancestors have undergone a very peculiar arrangement ; what *was* our dear friend Karl, is now a —Cabbage !”

Now do we not gather as fine philosophy from the savoy as from the serpent ? What is either cabbage or snake to Karl, who, crowned with amaranth, looks down from his starry home upon his would-be-wise descendant, and thinks him a prodigious noodle for pausing in his dinner ?

I have, I know, in a former letter, indicated the shallowness of this reasoning, as exposed by my very intimate friend the Hermetic Philosopher ; but your last letter, my son, in which you would fain draw a picture of military glory, has tempted me to this iteration. I have pondered upon your picture ; now, look at mine.

Many years ago I solaced myself with a brief residence in France. Purchasing a blouse, and donning a cap, I avoided the intrusive honours that might otherwise have been paid to the reputation of PUNCH, and to the vulgar I—

—“ appeared some harmless villager.”

On a certain Sunday, I had taken my customary stroll towards the fields. I well recollect it was Sunday, from a sudden jarring of my moral sense—a shock to my feelings. I was overtaken by a cart rattling on at a good pace : it contained half-a-dozen men and women, laughing as if there were no world to come, and looking as joyous and as happy as though the devil himself were a mere abstraction. The worst remains to be told ; the cart, in addition to the merry-makers, contained a fiddle and a bass-viol ; and it was but too evident, from the affectionate way in which the instruments of sin were hugged by two of the men in the cart, that the unhallowed catgut was to be fingered that very day to the tripping toes and heels of the wicked. I, who had for years been disciplined by the moral regularity of an English Sunday—I, who had spiritually paid reverence even to Sabbath-keeping housemaids, as, with noses flattened against parlour and kitchen panes, they solemnly pondered on sin and death, and the vacant street before them, wondering when the milkman would come, and especially wondering if John Roberts would keep his hour ; I, thus naturalised to the proprieties, felt my blood bubble to my cheek as I beheld the fiddle and the viol, and was rushing forward to check the horse, and remonstrate with the wicked holiday-keepers, when, happily, I observed that the driver was furnished with a long and unusually substantial whip. I stopped, said a short prayer for their souls, and struck into the fields.

Sunk, many fathoms deep in my feelings, I was wandering over a field of vetches, when I was startled by the loud and significant utterance of miscellaneous oaths, while a half-quacking, half-whistling noise rose as a sort of under accompaniment to the execration. Lifting up my eyes, I beheld a *garde-champêtre*, in cocked hat, with a drawn-sword. Now, a *garde-champêtre*, my son, is a sort of field-constable, who takes charge of the crows in his district, with the sloe and blackberry-bushes; who sees that the moles are not disturbed in their subterranean operations, and who benevolently assists the hogs out of the mud, should they chance to stick in it; albeit the provision of nature was never more beautifully displayed than in the anatomy of French hogs; for nature, knowing what dreadful miry roads they have to walk upon, has benevolently put them upon stilts. To return to the *garde-champêtre*.

I looked and beheld this field-officer, as I have said, in cocked hat and with drawn sword: and there he was swearing and shouting, at what—think you? Why, a drove of goslings! They had—bold birds!—intruded beyond their own proprietary; and there was the *garde-champêtre* with his drawn sword—methinks I see the blade now, gleaming in a July sun!—driving those bits of quacking, whistling, waddling flannel before him,—now with his weapon patting a straggler into the ranks—now urging one—now chiding another—until he got them all into very good marching order—and then with a sweet serenity, he subsided from swearing into singing, and cocking his cocked hat, he struck up—

“En avant, marchons!
Contre leur cannon;”

the goslings, with all their might, quacking and whistling in chorus.

I turned round, and pensively leaning my back against a tree, watched the *garde-champêtre* as he marched along; and as he sang and the goslings responded to him—the hapless goslings, guided by the sword to have their throats cut some day for the kitchen,—I said to myself—

“There goes glory!”

From that day, my son, I have never seen a regiment of horse or foot without thinking of the goslings.

LETTER XXII.

ON THE CHOICE AND TREATMENT OF A WIFE.

MY DEAR SON,—It was the remark of a no less distinguished mountebank than Cardinal de Retz—(he and I were very intimate, albeit he never publicly acknowledged the acquaintanceship,)—that it mattered little what were the talents of a man, what was his good fortune in every other respect, if he were unlucky in a wife. By which the Cardinal meant—and if he did not, I do—that a wife to be justly called the better part of a man, must bring with her a sufficient quantity of the precious metal: otherwise, she is only flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone; a burden of clay, and not an ornament of gold. Happily, my son, this truth is now so generally acknowledged in good society that, unless you were wilfully callous to its influence, you could not fail to be affected by it. A wife is the husband's chattels—the philosophy of law declares it: indeed, the spouse of your bosom is considered by the law to be goods in a more especial degree than any other property. A man robs you of your wife, and thereby—I put an extreme case—snaps your heart-strings: you lose your better half, and you sue the thief to make good the loss by the payment of so many pieces of metal. The same man, respecting your heart-strings, makes a snatch at your watch-chain, and takes to his heels with the booty. You shout “Stop thief,” but the rogue escapes you. Well, the thief would quietly arrange the matter; would, for a fair consideration that should remunerate him for skill and loss of time, render back the abstracted chronometer. Hereupon the law cries—“What are you about? what! compromise a felony? Beware of the penalty!” No: you must put the thief into the dock, if he can be caught; you must punish him for the wrong he has done to society by stealing your repeater. If, on the other hand, he steal your wife, the matter—by the benevolent aid of judge and jury—may be settled between you, and your attorney empowered to give a fair receipt for the damages. Thus, above all other mundane possessions, a wife is property.

It is with this conviction of the true value of female excellence, that you must cast your eyes about you for a wife. You are to reflect upon the huge amount of evil brought upon man by woman, and are therefore in your own person to obtain as great

a degree of reparation as is possible from the daughters of the first offender.

You know the condition of a wife in the savage state. She is the drudge of her despotic lord ; who does little but look at himself in a glass, if he have been lucky enough to change skins for one ; sings, eats, plays, and meets in council. His wife, with a wooden mattock, or the shoulder-blade of a buffalo, digs the earth and sows the corn ; she drives away the birds, and, in due season, gathers the harvest : she pounds corn and salts buffalo's meat ; and hews wood and draws water, and prepares the feast ; in journeys, she carries the poles of the wigwam, and when a station is pitched upon, it is she who sets the wigwam up, her sovereign lord, the Great Eagle, doing nothing. My dear boy, it is even so in the very best society : that is, if the woman herself do not labour in all these menial offices, she brings the money by which they are done, and the convenience and enjoyment of her husband equally well insured. In whatever rank of life you are doomed to move, you are to choose your wife as the Indian chooses his squaw—for her ability to minister to your idleness.

I am sorry to say it, in England women are held in even superstitious veneration ; for the most part treated as creatures of superior sensibility of heart and refinement of spirit. (There are, certainly—as I have already indicated—many exceptions to the rule, proved by those successful husbands who are lodged, boarded, dressed, and allowed pocket-money by their helpmates.) The absurd deference paid by us to our women is finely rebuked by continental nations, where they have the prettiest words for the *beau sexe*, and nothing beyond. I know not a more dignified condition of man than that frequently exhibited at a French *café* ; where, at ten in the morning, husbands and fathers are to be seen immersed in *écarté*, the wife—the mere squaw—keeping a fitful eye upon her shop from the recesses of her back-parlour. My son, I know you are fond of billiards. Obtain a wife who by the work of her fingers, or by the produce of acquired gain, enables you to grow grey making cannons,—and at the worst, you will know something of the true dignity of wedlock, its beauty and its excellence.

In your choice of a wife, never forget that age is to be honoured when associated with money. Nothing more reverent than silver hairs with gold in the pockets. Besides, by marrying a woman well-stricken in years, you will be insured against the tortures of jealousy, at least on your own part ; and what is more, you will have continually by your side (that is, when you are at home,) a memento of the certain decay of mortality ;

which memento, if you rightly consider it, will be the surest inducement for you to enjoy life by every strictly legal means in your power. In all your pleasures, however, respect the laws of your country. Remember, that an act of Parliament is like a rock ; it matters not how nearly you approach it, so you do not bump against it.

As for your days of courtship, you are to remember that as woman is the weaker animal, it behoves your magnanimity never to cross her fancy, even in its most ridiculous whimsies. Give her, as horsemen have it, her head as much as she likes, until you turn *from* the church : you may afterwards assert the supremacy of manhood, and revenge the wrongs of Adam.

There are various ways of attaching the sex : but the surest is not to attempt to shine and sparkle, and go off in crackers of jokes before them. Women, somehow, have the same fear of witty men as of fireworks ; and thus, how often do pretty lively creatures link themselves to fools ! The most certain plan of success (I have it from a woman, and I believe an excellent authority,) is any way to *interest* them. In my own case—(I thought your poor mother had a deal of money, but—well, never mind,)—I at last affected consumption. For a long time your mother refused to have me ; when, however, I made her believe that I should not live six weeks, she married me directly. If an heiress refuse you, pretend to take to your bed with typhus fever, and ten to one but she'll insist upon your getting up to go to church with her.

If, after long courtship, you find the lady has not the money you at first imagined, hesitate not a moment, but drop her. It may seem cruel, but depend upon it, 'tis all for her good. As for the nonsense of romantic writers about the wear and tear of the female heart, 'tis a lie in print, and nothing more. Wear and tear ! Female hearts never tear : no, my son ; they always stretch.

LETTER XXIII.

A FEW LAST WORDS. PUNCH REVIEWS HIS LABOURS. THE
LOTTERY OF LIFE.

WELL, my Son, I now approach the end of my labours. Reflecting upon what I have written, I feel that I may in a double sense call myself your father. You are not merely the offspring of my loins; but I trust, I may say, I have begotten your mind.

Yes, I have thrice scratched my head, and feel that I have nothing more to say to you. I have now merely to contemplate—with that delicious self-complacency which plays the divinest music on a man's heart-strings—the beauty and excelling utility of the labour undertaken by my parental love. I have now only to lean back in my easy chair, and twirling my thumbs, see, with dreaming eyes, my beloved child playing a most prosperous part in this eventful world. Let others call it a vale of tears, you, my son, will walk through it with a continual chuckle. Let others groan over the uncertainty of daily bread; you, my son, will have “your teeth white with milk, and your eyes red with wine.” Let others look with longing glance at pauper sixpences, you—for you have taken your father's counsel—will know where to lay your hand upon ingots.

Consider, my son, what gratitude you owe to destiny for making you what you are. You are the son of PUNCH. You might have been the child of a Lord Chancellor. From your cradle you inherited a wisdom denied to millions of others. Had you been born to finest cambric and Brussels lace, you had never been taught the beautiful truths of life, which it has been my paternal care to *tattoo* in your adolescent mind. The son of PUNCH! Consider, my child, the many, many million chances you had against your being this, and be grateful for your exceeding felicity.

Mr. William Wordsworth says—

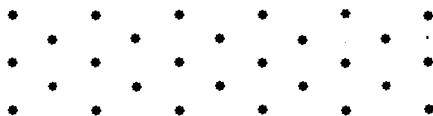
“Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting :
The soul that rises with us, our life's star
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar.”

Now, for a moment adopting this poetical conceit, imagine the millions of souls about to be despatched to this world, as a sort

of penal settlement, an uncomfortable half-way house, on the road to immortal fields of asphodel. Have you seen whole clouds of swallows congregating on the sea-shore for their mysterious flight to—*where*, still remains a mystery? This multitudinous fluttering of wings can give you but the poorest idea of the gathering of human souls, bound to earth, and “trailing clouds of glory” from the home they are about to leave. Your finite apprehension cannot grasp the marvel in its entirety; yet it may do something. You see the myriads of winged souls—you hear their fluttering; you see that they are like one another, as swallow is like to swallow; their chirp is in the same key; no soul asserts a dignity over its fellow-voyager; each has the same length of wing, the same hue of feather. These are souls not yet provided with lodgings; they are souls, so to speak, in the abstract. Well, swoop they come down on earth, and like the swallows I have spoken of, take their residence in clay.

Alas and alas! poor souls! Some are doomed to coal-pits, some to arsenic mines, some dig in misery and darkness, some toil and toil, and hunger and hunger; and every day is but the wretched repetition of the past. And yet with all this certain evil grinding and crushing of thousands, how few among them would consent to draw their lot again, if Destiny were to hold forth her human lucky-bag, to give another chance! “No, no,” says the Hottentot, with a proud downward look at his girdle of sheep’s-gut—“no, no; I don’t draw again; for who knows, I might come up a Dutch boor.” “No lucky-bag for me,” cries the Esquimaux; “I might lose my delicious whale blubber, and turning up an Englishman, be doomed to beef and porter.” “Much obliged to you,” says the poor idiot with a *gottre* at his throat as big as a foot-ball,—“I hear there are such folks as Patagonians; straight-limbed fellows, seven feet high; no lucky-bag for me—I might be one of them.”

If such, then, be the contentment of the great mass of the suffering world,—how prodigious should be your felicity to know that you are the son of PUNCH!—to feel that you hold a position, the proudest, the noblest,—the—



If the reader be a father, surely, surely he will sympathise with my feelings.

I had not heard from my son for a long time. I was thinking of him, when I was startled by the knock of the postman. I know not how it was ; but the smitten iron sent a chill through my heart, and the goose-quill fell from my fingers.

Our landlady—we were then in lodgings—brought me up a letter. My wife was happily from home ; called to assist at a neighbour's labour. I immediately recognised the handwriting of my son ; and, with trembling fingers, broke the wafer. I give the contents.

" Condemned Cell, Newgate.

"HONOURED PARENT,—I have to the best of my abilities followed the advice sent to me from time to time in your Letters. You will, therefore, as the Ordinary says, not be surprised to find I write from this place. It is a case of mutton, and I am to be hanged on Monday.

"Your Son,

"PUNCH, THE YOUNGER.

"P.S. You will find that, in spite of my misfortunes, I have the credit of my family still at heart. I shall therefore be hanged as John Jones."

My heroic boy kept his word : and until this very hour, his mother is ignorant of his fate, believing him to be at this moment Ambassador at the Court of ——

PUNCH'S
COMPLETE LETTER WRITER.

PUNCH'S COMPLETE LETTER WRITER.

Dedication

TO

SECRETARY FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT.

MY DEAR ———,—Having, as I modestly believe, written a Complete Letter Writer — yes, having penned some fifty models of epistolary correspondence, involving all the affections, interests, rights, wrongs, and courtesies of social life,—I am naturally anxious to obtain for the work the protecting countenance of a high, appropriate name. Your official privilege makes you, in truth, the very interesting object I have some time looked for with increasing despair. I confess it; I desponded lest I should fail to obtain a patron whose natural genius and finely educated taste would immediately appreciate in my labour the manifold heart-touches, the subtleties of style, with—greater glory than all—that practical golden wisdom, without which the very finest writing is little more than the very finest glass-blowing.

A mere high title at the head of a Dedication is a piece of pompous lumber. In the shallowness of our judgment, we bestow a humiliating pity on the forlorn savage who lays his offering of fruits and flowers before his wooden idol with a formidable name; an idol certainly with gold rings in its nose and ears, and perhaps an uncut diamond in its forehead; but nevertheless, an insensible block. The fruits shrivel and rot; the flowers die a death of profitless sweetness; for the idol has no gustatory sense—no expanding nostril. I say, we pity the poor, darkened fool, who may have risked his limbs for cocoanuts, who may have tempted the whole family of mortal snakes,

groping his way through woods, scrambling up ravines to gather flowers, and only to lay the hard winnings of his toil before a stock, a stone, that cannot even so much as wink a thankfulness for such desperate duty done.

And what shall we say of the author who, choosing a patron merely for his titles—for the gold rings in his nose and ears, and certainly not for the diamond in his head—lays before him a book for which the poor creature has not the slightest relish? He is incapable of tasting its deliciousness. Its most sapid morsels lie in his mouth like bran. He chews and chews a prime cut, yea, the very pope's-eye of philosophy, as it were chopped hay. I bestow ink upon no such man. And thou, sagacious and therefore pacific goose, still enjoy thy common right; still with snaky neck search the short grass; still, with fixed and meditating look, eye man askance—I disturb thee not; I rifle not thy wing of its gray wealth to nib a pen for such a patron.

But hither, hither, ye sprites and genii—old visitants of dimmest garrets—ye who have made the musty air musical with your quivering pinions, and with kindly conjurations given state to stateless kings, who, from their attic thrones, rule the thankless and despising world beneath,—hither ye who from the phials of hope have sweetened the bitterness of the present,—who first did crown the poet in his solemn solitude, and—no illusion but sweetest truth!—made him see in every growing line a grove of budding laurel—made him with a shuddering glee hear the far-off praises of the future, even as men hear the distant music of a coming triumph! Hither, hither, ye Parnassian fays, and bring me ink—bright ink—odorous ink—ink made in the deep recesses of some Indian wood, dark as night, yet fragrant as the morn.

Well done. It is black and liquid as a black eye smiling sweet mischief on unconscious man. And now, boys, a pen! Stay, know ye the vicarage of Purple-cloth? It is a fruitful nook, where there is an hourly struggle between the rector and his geese which shall be the fattest, man or birds. Hie ye there, and straightway choose the primest goose. Kill him, yet kill him quickly, humanely, singing some sacrificial melody the while. He will give up his quills serenely, quietly as a dying laureat. When the goose is dead, take care that the creature be properly buried; to which end I charge ye give his body to the poor.

So! An errand quickly done. Here have we pen and ink. As for paper—no matter; out of the most beautiful, yet costly bravado, *I will write my Dedication on the back of a £50 note, which—*

the words enshrined in type—be it known, remains the perquisite of the printer. May he make the most he can of it! And now to begin my Dedication in good earnest.

MY DEAR ———,—I perceive from the works of those daily law-breakers, the reporters of Parliamentary speeches, that you have the right—a right solemnised by law—to burglariously break and enter into every package, bundle, letter, note, or billet-doux, sent through the Post-office. Yes; you are permitted this high privilege by the Act of 1 Victoria (whom God preserve!)

I protest, ———, that henceforth I shall never think of that crowning pile of St. Martin's-le-Grand, without in imagination seeing you work away with a crowbar, smashing red and black wax—or, by the more subtle agency of steam, softening wafers, that the letter may open its lips, and yield up the contents of its very heart to the Secretary of the Home Department.

I am not a squeamish creature, ———. I have not what is called by the world false modesty: a modesty, I presume, to be classed with false ringlets and false teeth, and therefore never used but when the real thing is wholly departed. No; I have seen too much of the world to care a great deal for its turned-up noses and the ugly mouths it may make at me. Nevertheless, ———, there is a point between philosophy and apathy. Yes; the rhinoceros has his tender part—I have mine: so tender, and withal so vital, that I cannot get rid of it. Were I, like Achilles, vulnerable only in one heel, I would instantly cheat Fate of its malice, have my limb amputated, and laugh securely at destiny on a wooden leg. This, ———, I would do: but a man cannot take the weak parts of his heart away as dexterously as a careful housewife removes the fly-blow from meat. Hence my complaint.

My *one* weakness—for weaknesses, strangely enough, are like wives; no man, whatever the truth may be, thinks it proper to own to more than one at a time,)—my *one* weakness is a disgust, a horror, that any man should dare to profane the sanctity of my letters! I know not—for if a man can save a bit of self-flattery out of his weakness, it is so much virtue got, as one may say, out of the fire—I know not if this aversion may not, in some degree, arise from my love of mankind, and consequently my annoyance at seeing it in a paltry, pitiable condition, pushing its brazen nose where only its brass can protect it. Be this as it may; when I learned this morning that you made yourself a sort of horse or ass-hair sieve,

through which the correspondence of men was passed, that, if there, the daggers, pikes, and pistols of the writers might be duly deposited in the state vessel appointed to detect them—I confess it, I felt in a paroxysm of passion, for the proper expression of which no words have as yet been fashioned.

And for this just reason. I knew that my name was too much noised in the world to escape even the ears of Cabinet Ministers. Hence, I felt assured that my letters—and the thousands I receive!—had all of them been defiled by the eyes of a spy; that all my most domestic secrets had been rumbled and touzled, and pinched here and pinched there—searched by an English Minister as shuddering modesty is searched at a French custom-house! My first feeling was intense indignation; and then I vehemently slapped my breast, and so, giving the virtue a jerk, pity came uppermost.

Then I thought,—how can I and you ever meet again? When we met, I was wont to don a crimson waistcoat, worked with all sorts of impossibilities in gold; to wear a court coat of cut chocolate velvet, and silk stockings shining like glass. Knowing that the vulgar were taken by such things, I always went among Cabinet Ministers, drest to the amazement even of tailors. And now you know my secret, and how in that dress can we meet again? Deny it not; you must know it, for you have read Mr. Nathan's letters long before they came to my unconscious hand, letters demanding of me, I will not take upon myself to say how many times, payment for the hire of that crimson waistcoat and chocolate velvet coat! This is one case; I might cite a hundred.

At length, I took comfort. A true chymist will extract sugar even from the cudgel he has been beaten with. ——— has, I thought, ill-used me, but nevertheless, from his very shabbiness will I extract the sweets of patronage. I will dedicate to him my "Complete Letter Writer;" and for this reason—a reason stringent as an iron hoop.

As ——— has the whole run of the Post-office—as he has the unquestioned fingering of all the letters of the Queen's subjects—he cannot but possess a most refined, most exquisite taste, for the graces of epistolary composition. Yes, he above all men, from his large reading of the subject, will take and hug to his bosom—PUNCH'S COMPLETE LETTER WRITER. He will appreciate its many-coloured style; he will acknowledge it as a work to supersede all works of the sort hitherto written; he will—perhaps in his place in Parliament, and so save a considerable sum in the way of advertisements—declare of the *book*, that no family should be without it; and that every

gentleman's library, having all else, yet wanting it, has nothing!

Therefore, ———, it is with the profoundest opinion of your experienced ability to judge the surpassing merits of the volume—a volume for the world—that PUNCH'S COMPLETE LETTER WRITER is dedicated to you,

By your old acquaintance,

PUNCH.

LETTER I.

FROM A LADY INQUIRING THE CHARACTER OF A SERVANT.

MADAM,—Bridget Duster having applied to me for a place of maid-of-all-work, I beg to learn of you, as her last mistress, her fitness for the serious responsibilities of that situation. Having suffered so much from the impertinence and wickedness of servants—(I have often thought they were only sent into this world to torment respectable people),—you will, I am sure, forgive me if I appear somewhat particular in my inquiries. Experience, madam, has made me circumspect. There was a time when I thought all the world as good and honest as myself; but house-keeping wipes the bloom from the human heart, and makes us lock our tea-caddies.

I have kept house for five-and-twenty years, in which time I have constantly endeavoured to find a servant who should be without a fault; yet, though I have given eight pounds a year with tea and sugar,—would you believe it?—I have never once succeeded. However, I must say it, I like the face of Bridget; I never saw a deeper small-pox. As for handsome servants, I never have 'em; they always think more of their faces than their fire-irons, and are puckering up their mouths at the looking-glass when they should be rubbing the door-plate. Curls, too, I never suffer to cross my threshold. I know more than one instance in which curls have destroyed the peace of a family. For my money, a servant can't be too plain: in a word, I think ugliness to be a sort of cheap livery intended by Nature for maids-of-all-work—it keeps 'em in their proper place, and prevents 'em thinking of foolishness. So far Bridget's looks are most satisfactory.

And now, ma'am, for the article of dress. Servants have never been servants since linsey-woolsey went out. It makes my very flesh creep to see 'em flaunting about, for all the world as if they were born to silk gowns and open-work in their stockings. I have seen a housemaid go out for the day with a parasol! I prophesied her end, and—poor wretch!—so it came about. What I have suffered, too, from such presumption! I once had a creature who copied every new cap I had, and so violated my best feelings under my own roof! Bridget looks a humble dresser, fit for a kitchen: I trust she is so.

I hope, however, she is sober. When servants are very plain, they sometimes, to revenge themselves on nature, fly to drink. This is shocking ; for with such people, with all one's locking and bolting, the brandy is never safe.

In the next place, does Bridget break ? Not but what I always make my servants pay for all they destroy ; still, they can't pay for one's nerves. Again, there is this danger—they may break beyond their wages.

Is Bridget honest ? Pray, madam, be particular on this point, for I have been much deceived. I once took a servant with the finest character for honesty ; and, only a week afterwards, detected her giving three cold potatoes to a little hurdy-gurdy foreigner with white mice.

Is Bridget civil ? Will she bear wholesome reproof ? A servant who answers is my abomination. It is clearly flying in the face of the best interests of society. Surely, people who pay wages have a right to find what fault they please ; it is the natural privilege that marks the mistress from the maid. I would have a severe law to punish a servant who answers—even if right.

Is Bridget an early riser, without any reference to the time she may be allowed to go to bed ? A good maid-of-all-work should, so to speak, be like a needle, and always sleep with one eye open.

Has Bridget any followers ? Such creatures I never allow. I conceive that a servant ought to be a sort of nun, and, from the moment she enters your house, should take leave of all the world beside. Has she not her kitchen for willing hands always to do something in ? And then for company, doesn't she see the butcher, the baker, the dustman—to say nothing of the sweeps ?

Is Bridget industrious—is she clean ? I hope, for the poor creature's sake, that you may be able to answer these few questions to my satisfaction, when Bridget may immediately bring her boxes. With me her duties will be few, but they must be punctually performed. Indeed, I require a servant to consider herself a sort of human kitchen clock. She must have no temper, no sulks, no flesh-and-blood feelings, as I've heard impudent hussies call their airs and graces, but must go as regularly through her work as though she was made of steel springs and brass pulleys. For such a person, there is a happy home in the house of

Your obedient Servant,

PAMELA SQUAW.

LETTER II.

FROM A SERVANT, INQUIRING THE CHARACTER OF A MISTRESS.

DEAR MOLLY—Finding that you're in place next door to Mrs. Squaw, and remembering what friends we used to be when both of us lived with the pastry-cook, I have thought fit to write to you to inquire about your neighbour. It's all very fine, Molly, for mistresses to haggle about the characters of their maids, but surely we poor servants have as much right to ask the characters of our mistresses. However, folks who pay wages will always have the upper hand in this world, whatever to our comfort may happen to 'em afterwards.

I thank my stars I don't judge of people by their looks, otherwise I wouldn't go into Mrs. Squaw's kitchen, if it was made of gold; she's dreadful ugly, to be sure, but I don't despise her for that, if her temper's sweet. I can't bear a mistress that's always nagging and nagging. A good noise once in a way I don't mind—it brisks up one's blood; but I have known mistresses always pushing their words at you and about you, as if they were sticking pins in a cushion with no flesh and blood.

How does she like her maids to dress? Mind, I don't insist on ringlets *in* the house, but when I go out, I'm my own mistress. I've given up two places for my bird-of-paradise feather—it looks quite alive in my white chip!—and would give up twenty. After slaving among pots and pans for a month, it is so sweet to be sometimes taken for a lady on one's Sunday out.

And now, dear Molly, tell me truly; does Mrs. Squaw drink? I have lived in one family where the mistress kept a bottle in a thing that looked for all the world like the covering of a book. No wages should make me do this again; and—perhaps I am wrong—but, looking at Mrs. Squaw, I thought I never saw a redder nose. When a mistress has such a habit, a poor girl's character is never safe.

I've agreed to pay for all I break, but that I don't mind, as I never break nothing—it's always the cat. But then I've known mistresses mean enough to put off a cracked basin on a poor servant. What is Mrs. Squaw's character for crockery?

Mrs. Squaw asked me if I had any followers, as she allowed of no such thing. I said—and truly, Molly—that I had nobody that followed *me*; but, Molly, there is a young man that I have followed these two years, and will, so long as I've eyes to stare

and limbs to move. Such a sweet creature—six feet one inch and a half without his boots! Such a mustachio on his lip—such a delicate thing, just the colour of a leech! He's in the Life Guards, Molly; quite a building of a man. You can't think how fond he is of me; for these last two years he's smoked my wages in cigars. I lost one place about him, and gloried in it! It was one quarter-day, and he came whistling about the area. Mistress saw his red coat, and ringing the bell, asked me what I meant by harbouring a low soldier! My blood was up like ginger-beer. "It's all very well for you, ma'am," says I, "to say low soldier. But, ma'am," says I, "you don't know what it is to be courted by a Life Guardsman."

Oh, these mistresses, Molly! they think poor servants have no more flesh and blood than a porridge-skillet. They can have their comfortable courtings in their parlours and drawing-rooms; and then, with their very toes at the fire, they can abuse a poor servant for only whispering a bit of love, all among the snow, perhaps, in the area. This is the treatment that often makes poor girls desperate, and drives 'em to marriage long afore their time.

No followers, indeed! No: they think that the cat and the kettle, and the kitchen clock, are company enough for a poor servant. They never think of us in the long winter nights, when they are playing at cards, or chatting with folks who've dropped in—they never think of us, all alone as we are, without a soul to speak to! No; we must have no followers, though, perhaps, the parlour's ringing again with laughter; and our only chance of opening our lips is the chance of being sent out to get oysters for the company.

However, dear Molly, write me ali you know about the character of Mrs. Squaw: if she's sober, and gives civil words and regular wages to her servants, I don't mind having her for a mistress, until the sweet day arrives when I become a soldier's wedded lady. Till then,

Believe me, your friend and old fellow-servant,

BRIDGET DUSTER.

LETTER III.

FROM A GENTLEMAN TO A FRIEND, SOLICITING HIS ACCEPTANCE
AND BOND.

MY DEAR RICHARDS,—In this our fleeting life, how few are the opportunities afforded us of really testing the hearts of our friends! Sorry, indeed, should I be for my own nature, were I of the barren creed of those who, from the depths of their would-be wisdom, smile knowingly at friendship, as though, like the word phoenix, it spoke of something very fine, but very fabulous: a spicy monster, building in the clouds, and never known to descend upon our earth. No: I should be among the most insensible of my kind—a very savage of social life—did I fail to worship friendship in my innermost heart as a virtue illustrated by one of the noblest of created men. Forgive me if I do not name him; for true worth, like the rose, *will* blush at its own sweetness!

Truly, it is pleasant to hear men abuse the world, as though, forsooth, they themselves were the only shining exceptions from the general selfishness they condemn. When I hear a man cry out, "It is a bad world," I must of course lump him with the aggregate iniquity; for how can he have the enormous vanity to select himself as the one pure Adam from naughty millions? No, Richards; be it my faith to think the best of the world; be it my special felicity to know that I hold the heart—ay, as though it were in my hand—of the truest and the best of friends. But what, indeed, is friendship, if it be not active? What but a harp, or the divinest of Cremonas, resting in silence—all the melodious, ravishing sounds that waft our spirits to the clouds, sleeping in their strings, a dumb sleep? So is it with the heart of a true friend until touched by the wants of his companion.

My dear Richards, I enclose you a bill for a hundred and fifty pounds. That bill, like the harp or fiddle I have spoken of, is now as a dead thing. But only write across it "Accepted, John Richards," and it will have a voice of gold—yes, it will ring with sovereigns. Oh, friendship! thou divinest alchemist, that man should ever profane thee! Send the bill back by post, as I *must* have the cash to-morrow.

I have many acquaintance, any of whom would have gone through the little form (for it is only a form) I ask of you. But

no : I should have thought such an act on my part a treason to our friendship. You know, my dear boy, that I am apt to be imaginative ; and thus, it is a sweet and peculiar pleasure to me to fancy both our names linked indissolubly together—the union legalised by a five-shilling stamp,—each adding value to the other by being paired. Thus, it almost seems to me, that we merge two souls into one—that in very truth, by the potent spell of friendship, we are no longer single, but bound together by a bond unknown to those pagans of the ancient time, Orestes and Pylades, Damon and Pythias !

Yes ; with a slight flourish of the pen, we shall feel what I once thought impossible, a greater interest in one another. We shall know that our names, written upon accredited paper, pass in the world as symbols of gold ; you will have turned ink-drops into ready money, and *I* shall have received it. The roses that wreath around the stamp are, to my mind's eye, Richards, the very types of our kindred minds. Do not, however, fail to post the bill to-night.

There is—I believe he calls it—a bond on my account for three or four hundreds to which a troublesome attorney wants your name. Come and breakfast with me on Monday, my dear boy, and it shall be ready for you. Heaven bless you,

Your friend, to the Place of Tombs,

MONTAGUE ST. GEORGE.

P.S. I have a *pâté de foie gras*, which I don't think you ever tasted, from Paris, for Monday. It's made of geese's liver. They put the live goose before the fire and make it drink and drink. Rather cruel, but there's no mistake in the liver.

LETTER IV.

THE FRIEND'S ANSWER, REFUSING BOTH ACCEPTANCE AND BOND.

MY DEAR MONTAGUE,—Your letter has given me great pleasure. You know how highly I have always thought of friendship : it is, as you say, a divine thing. Indeed to my mind so divine, that it should never, no never, be mixed up with money.

Nevertheless, however we may differ on this little point, it is impossible for me to speak as I feel on your letter. It is charmingly written. There is a beauty, a fervour in your sentiments about friendship that convinces me you have felt its treasures, and are therein, though poor in the world's esteem,

H

rich as an emperor. My dear friend, cultivate this style of writing: I am certain money is to be made by it.

I agree with you as to your opinion of the world; it is a glorious world—and glorious, indeed, are some of the people in it. The friendship that has so long subsisted between us, must make me acknowledge this. Your simile of a friend and a fiddle is perfect and touching. What, indeed, are they both made for, if not to be played upon?

Your picture of the unison of souls, when both the souls' hands are to the same bill, is beautiful, affecting. I have read the passage over twenty times. It has neither one word too many or too few. The picture is perfect: a cabinet gem to be locked up in one's heart. The unison of souls is a charming phrase; but, unhappily, my friend, it is too fine, of too subtle an essence to be acknowledged and respected by the coarse men of the world. The sheriff, for instance, cares not for souls, only inasmuch as they are in bodies. Now, unhappily, so far as we know, disembodied souls do not draw or accept; otherwise, what felicity would it be to me to meet and mingle with your spirit on a five-shilling stamp!

I confess, too, that it is tempting to think that, by the alchemy of a few ink-drops, I could put a hundred and fifty gold pieces (bating the discount) in the purse of my friend. Alas! if the ceremony began and ended with ink, I would spend a Black Sea upon you. You should have my name ten thousand times multiplied, with a good wish in every stroke, hair and thick.

That you have eschewed so many acquaintances, all happy with clean-nibbed pens to accept for you, and in the fulness of your friendship selected me, is a compliment, nay more, it is an evidence of your affection which I—I hope to deserve.

You know that I, as well as yourself, am apt to be imaginative. Imaginations, however, fly not always together. You say, that by accepting the bill, our souls would be united. My dear friend, for three months, I should feel ourselves growing together, every day strengthening the process. I should feel as if I breathed for two; nay, I should hardly turn in my bed unincumbered. I should, in my fancy, become a double man with only single strength to bear about my added load. You know the story of Sinbad and the Old Man of the Mountain? That is a fine allegory, though not understood. The truth is, the Old Man drew a bill, and Sinbad—guileless tar!—accepted it.

You speak of the roses that wreath about the stamp. They are, indeed, very pretty. But, somehow, my eye fell upon the thistles; which I doubt not, the benevolence of Her Majesty

causes to be embossed there : thistles, clearly significant that the man who accepts a bill, save for his own debt, is an ass.

I am, on the contrary,

Your affectionate friend,

JOHN RICHARDS.

P.S. I can't come on Monday, and I don't like *pâté de foie gras*. Why, in the name of mercy, should geese be treated as you describe? They never accept bills of other geese.

LETTER V.

FROM A VERY YOUNG GENTLEMAN TO A FAVOURITE ACTRESS
WHOM HE HAS ONLY SEEN IN PUBLIC.

DEAREST MADAM,—For these past six months I have pulled against my heart—I have resisted my transports—I have fought with my passion. Yes—I determined—I will die, and my consuming secret shall perish with me. Alas! silence is no longer possible. Your witcheries of to-night have driven me with whirlwind force to pen and ink. Your voice is still in my ears—your eyes still upon my cheek—I will, I must write!

Madam, I have long adored you. Love is my witness, that I never hoped to breathe as much; but after your devotion of this evening—after the heroic sacrifice that you have made for love—after the happy willingness you have shown to give up fortune, rank, and friends, and retire with your lover from the world, though that lover was but a woodman, with nothing but his axe to provide for you both,—after the development of such a feeling (believe it, adored one, there was not a dry eye in the pit), I should wrong the sweet susceptibility of your nature, I should wrong myself, to keep silence. No; the way in which you withered the unprincipled nobleman, the tempting seducer in the second act, convinced me with an electric shock that we were made for one another! I thought—ecstatic thought!—that catching your eye from the third row, you read my heart, and while the theatre rang with plaudits, that our souls mingled! Ah! was it not so?

But why alone speak of your virtues to-night? Does not every night show you more than something earthly? In whatever situation of life you are placed, are you not in all equally angelic? Have I not known you accused of theft, nay, of murder—and have I not—witness it, Heaven!—adored you all the more for

the charge? Has accident or malice thrown a shadow over you, that you have not burst forth all the brighter for the passing gloom? And in all these sorrows I have been with you! I, from the third row of the pit, have trembled with you—have visited you in prison—have attended you to the scaffold's foot, and then, in that delirious moment when the spoons were found, or the child, thought dead, ran on in a white frock,—then have I, though still in the third row, caught you innocent to my arms, and wept in ecstasy!

As a daughter, have I not seen you all your father could wish? As a wife, have you not cast a lustre upon all your wedding rings—as a young and tender mother—pardon me, sweet one,—have you not been more devoted than the pelican, gentler than the dove?

How was it possible, then, for six months to behold you, moving in and adorning every sphere—now to see you the polished countess, now the simple country maid—now smiling at want, and now giving away an unconsidered number of bank-notes,—how, in the name of Cupid, I ask it, was it possible even from the third row of the pit to behold all this, and not as I have done to worship you?

Shall I, ought I, to attempt to describe to you my feelings for one night? Will my love bear with me while I write? Why do I ask? Can I doubt it?

Exactly at half-past six—my heart, my best watch—I take the third seat of the pit. Often, for many minutes, I am there alone. I like it—I enjoy the solitude. I have often wished that not another soul would enter the theatre, that I might, a mental epicure, have all the feast to myself. I seem to grudge every man his seat, as slowly one by one drops in. I unwillingly suffer anybody to participate in your smiles and honied words. No: I would have you act all to myself. Even applause sometimes throws me into a dangerous paroxysm: I feel it as an intrusion on my privilege that any one should dare to applaud but me; my blood boils to my fingers' ends; but I suppress my feelings, and have as yet, though sorely tempted, knocked no man from his seat.

I have breathed the secret of my love to nobody; and yet my eyes must have betrayed me. Forgive me; I could not control my eyes. Methinks you ask me, who has discovered my love? Smile not, I will tell you; the fruit-women Good creatures! there is not one who does not hurry to me with a play-bill, folded down at the glorious letters that compose your name, her finger—as though by accident—pointed at the soul-delighting word. I will not tell you how I treasure those bills; no, you

shall never know that every such play-bill is folded beneath my pillow at night, and is resigned to a morocco portfolio in the morning ; my sensations at the theatre first briefly marked in the margin. This you shall *never* know.

Let me, however, return to my third seat. The curtain is down—the orchestra yet empty. That curtain seems to shut me from Paradise, for I know you are behind it. The musicians come in, and my heart begins to throb at the overture. The play begins : perhaps you are discovered in Scene I., in the depths of misery—how deliciously my brain beats to know it ! You speak ; and all my veins are throbbing like the tongue of a Jew's-harp. Perhaps you sing ; and then I feel a kind of sweet swooning sickness—a sort of death made easy—that I can't describe. At times you dance ; and then do I seem lifted by some invisible power, and made to float about you. Then you leave the stage, and all who come after are no more to me than jointed dolls with moving eyes. How I loathe the miserable buffoon—the comedy-man, as he is called—who, while I am languishing for your next appearance, makes the empty audience laugh about me : such mirth seems an insult to my feelings—a desecration of my love. No ! you from the stage, plot and players are lost to me ; I sit, only thinking of your return—sometimes abstracted from the scene, mechanically counting the scattered hairs in the head of the first fiddle.

And thus, until the curtain is about to drop, and then—my heart with it—I throw a bouquet, that has nestled all the night in my button-hole, at your fairy feet. Then do I rush from the pit to the stage-door ; and there—the more delighted if it rains—there do I stand, until sweetly cloaked and shawled, I watch you—see your Adelaide boots emerge into the street, and with a thought, vanish into cab or coach. Ha ! the door is closed with a slam that seems to snap my heart-strings. The horse-shoes sound in the distance—I am alone. I wander to my lodgings, sometimes in despair, and sometimes in delirious spirits, feeling that I have your arm warm and pressing under mine, and still seeing your eyes look at me, as I thought they looked at the third row of the pit.

I arrive at my cold lodging. Yet, ere I sleep, I look at your dozen faces—for I have at least a dozen—plain and coloured, hung about my walls. Yes, my beloved one ! there you are, and though only published from half-a-crown to five shillings, worlds should not buy you of me !

If you have played a new part, I touch no breakfast until I read the papers. How my heart goes down upon its knees to the sensible critic who tries—although vainly—to sing your full

deserts ; whilst for the wretch who finds fault, or—but enough on this disgusting theme. They are monsters in the human form who write so-called criticisms for newspapers.

And now, my dearest love, in the same spirit of frankness—with that boundless gush of affection—which you have so wonderfully developed to-night—with that fervour and truth which prove to me that we were born for one another,—and that I have too rightly read your heart to believe that my want of fortune will be any defect in your eyes—rather, indeed, I should say, from what I have seen to-night, a recommendation—

I remain,

Your devoted Lover,

CHARLES SPOONBILL.

P.S. Please, dearest, leave an answer at the stage-door. And, dearest, pray let me catch your eye in the third row to-morrow.

LETTER VI.

ANSWER FROM THE ACTRESS'S FATHER TO THE VERY YOUNG GENTLEMAN.

SIR,—You are either a madman or a fool. I have to inform you that I usually carry a stout stick. Any more letters to my daughter, and you may become acquainted with it. Should you, however, be beyond my power of chastisement, there is a certain gentleman, to whom, on the advice of my daughter, I have only to show your letter, and he will commission his footman to thrash you as your impertinence deserves.

Your obedient Servant,

THESPIS BURNTCORK.

P.S. In future I shall keep *my* eye upon the third row of the pit.

LETTER VII.

FROM A GENTLEMAN TO HIS FRIEND, ON BEING CALLED TO
THE BAR.

MY DEAR TOM,—I hope I am the first to congratulate you. What a career is open to you! There is such loftiness of purpose—such true nobility of aim in the profession to which with a lover's fondness you have bound yourself—that in a measure I feel myself glorified by the advancement of my friend!

You are now called to the bar! Yes, you are of the happy few chosen by the solemn election of the law as the privileged champions of humanity. To you the widow and the orphan may prefer their prayers; in you they are taught to look for an adviser and a benefactor. Injured lowliness may claim the bounty of your counsel, and innocence betrayed demand the lightning of your words.

With these thoughts, what strengthening comfort must support you through the paths of study still to be adventured! Feeling the dignity of your mission, your mind will instinctively reject whatever is mean and mercenary—will assimilate to itself all that is beautiful, and pure, and good. In your hours of study you will feel that you are arming yourself for the overthrow of craft, oppression, and all the numerous brood of ignorance and ill: you will be sustained by the thought, that you are dedicating the powers you have received from Heaven to the noblest vindication of its grandest truth,—justice to all men. With this belief, you will labour rejoicingly: you will dedicate your night to study, and the early lark will greet you at your book.

It is, I know, averred that the study of law is dry and harsh—a barren, thankless theme; that “the Books” have that within them to weary the most patient spirit. And so, indeed, it may be to those who as mere word-catchers would study them; who, incapable of considering them in a philosophic light as operative on the social mass, would seek their pages as Indians seek poison berries,—only for better means to slay their game with.—But you, my dear friend, have nobler aspirations; you contemplate law as the discreet and virtuous daughter of Justice, and not as her Abigail.

When you look around and consider the various occupations

of men, how sweet must be your self-complacency ! You cannot but observe how thousands are doomed to a plodding obscurity ; how thousands pass from birth to death with no one action of their lives to signalise themselves among their fellows : how, like corn, they grow, ripen, and are cut down, leaving behind them no mark of their past existence. Again, how many pass their days in acts of violence, making life one scene of wrong and tumult ; whilst others creep and wind through the world timorous and cunning, with little of the majesty of man to glorify them. Forgetful of the greatness of their mission as human creatures, they dwell within the small circle of their selfishness, all things beyond mere things of fable.

How different is your lot ! You are "called to the bar : " you are chosen to play a part before the eyes of the whole world. You are to uplift your voice in defence of all that dignifies our nature : you are to work the daily champion of the weak and the distressed. Is it possible that man can have a more glorious vocation ? Is it within the ambition of a truly virtuous mind to achieve greater triumphs ?

Again, how beautiful will be the study of human nature laid before you ! Every day you will be called to read that wondrous volume, the human heart, in all its strange yet fascinating contradictions. And when, in the fulness of fame, distinguished by every attribute of moral goodness, you are summoned to the bench,—you will display to the world one of its noblest spectacles, a great and good man honoured for his worth. Your elevation, whilst it rewards the labours of your own clear spirit, will, star-like, shine upon the hopes of others, inciting them to act your worthiness again and again. Thus will your excellence be multiplied, and example beget example.

Believe me, my dear Tom,

Your sincere friend,

JUSTUS HARTLEY.

LETTER VIII.

REPLY OF THE GENTLEMAN CALLED TO THE BAR TO HIS FRIEND.

MY DEAR HARTLEY,—You are, I find, the same enthusiastic, unsophisticated creature that I left at Cambridge. May you never meet with aught to change the noble simplicity of your nature !

True it is, I am "called ;" and most true I may, if I would

wish to starve, dub myself knight of all distressed matrons, virgins, and orphans. Unfortunately, however, for your rhapsody, it will always lie in the breast of the mother of accidents, whether I champion the wronged or the wronger : whether I am to pour oil and honey into wounds, or to be the humble instrument that adds another bruise : whether, indeed, I fight on the side of Virtue, or lustily take arms against her. This, however, is the accident of my fate ; and so that good retainers come in, I am content to bow to it. In your noble philanthropy, Justus, please to consider the condition of the world, if only what seemed virtuous and innocent were defended—if all who, by the force of circumstance, appeared knaves were left to scramble for themselves. Look at the wrong committed under this ignorant devotion to abstract right. Virtue making victims by her very bigotry !

As for the hours of study, they certainly bring their sweets ; but verily not after the fashion you, in your blithe ignorance, imagine. Law, my dear fellow, is not a region of fairy to be searched for golden fruits and amaranthine flowers ; no, it is a deep, gloomy mine, to be dug and dug, with the safety lamp of patience lighting us, through many a winding passage—a lamp which, do what we will, so frequently goes out, leaving us in darkness.

I grant you many of the high, emobling privileges of the profession that your eloquence has dwelt upon ; but there are others which, if you know not, permit me in the freedom of friendship to say, you know nothing of the pleasures of the bar. Consider, what invulnerable armour is a wig—a gown ! When they are once donned, you are permitted, by the very defence you wear, to play with the characters and feelings of men even as little girls play with dolls ; ripping their seams, blackening their faces, making sport with them in any way for the prosperity of your cause, and the benefit of your client. By virtue of your profession you are emphatically a gentleman ; and the very mode in which you are permitted to exercise your calling proves you to be a slanderer for so much money. You are protected by the Court, and, taking full advantage of your position, you may say in the face of Justice that which a regard for your anatomy would not permit you to utter even in a tavern. You are protected, and may to your heart's full wish enjoy your abuse. You are pistol-proof, and may therefore throw what mud and call what names you please. You have the privilege of the bar, which in this case means—the privilege of cowardice ; and to the last letter you avail yourself of its immunity.

You have likewise forgotten another privilege, that of cross-

examination. Ha! my friend, you know my love of a joke, and truly I anticipate much enjoyment from the freedom of tongue allowed me when I shall have a witness to practise upon. How I will "torture him with my wit"—how turn him inside out for the benefit of my client! Indeed, the true heroism of the advocate is only shown by his contempt of all things in honour of his fee. Hence, if retained by homicide to wash white and, if possible, to sweeten the blood-dyed ruffian for the world, I shall not hesitate (though assured of my client's guilt) to blacken all the witnesses against him. In pursuit of this high duty, I shall think it onerous upon me to impugn even the chastity of female virtue, so that by casting shame upon innocence, I may open the prison door to murder.

Your affectionate friend,

THOMAS BRASSBY.

P.S. Congratulate me. I have just received my maiden brief; a case against a sempstress, for illegally pawning a shirt.

LETTER IX.

FROM AN ELECTOR TO A MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT, SOLICITING
HIS INTEREST FOR A PLACE.

HONOURED SIR,—According to my promise, when I last had the pleasure of shaking your worthy and high-minded hand, I take up my pen to let you know how matters go on in our borough of Pottlepot. Oh, sir! the Blues are done for ever! They ought, if they had any sense of their littleness, to crawl upon all fours the rest of their natural lives: it's downright impudence of 'em to think of walking upright on two legs, like incorruptible, independent voters. But, sir, they are done for ever! As I said at the club on Saturday, where we always drink your honoured health standing with nine times nine, as I said, after we had toasted your patriotism and all your public and private virtues,—Sir Curtius Turnstile, says I, sits for Pottlepot for life; it's as good as his own freehold. And so it is, sir. Be sure of it, there isn't a Yellow that wouldn't die for you, with all their wives and families included. You have touched their hearts, Sir Curtius, in the proper way, and there isn't a man that wouldn't bleed for you in return. And then for the women; *why, I'm a sinner*, if last Sunday there weren't six babies

every one of 'em christened Curtius. There they were, sir—bless the little cherubs!—with yellow ribands in their caps, and ribands hung all over them, and their mothers and fathers smiling on the colours with all a parent's fondness. Ha, sir! it would have done your noble heart good to hear how the same night we drank the healths of the young Curtiuses—the baby Yellows—the future free and independent voters of Pottlepot.

But how, sir, should it be otherwise? Who can forget your kindness when you came among us to canvass? What condescension—what liberality! There's poor Mrs. Spriggs, the good soul who sells cakes; she never speaks of you without tears in her eyes; and as for her husband—a rascally Blue!—whom the kind creature made so drunk, and then shut the shutters on the day of poll, that when he woke he thought it was still night, and so went to sleep again,—dear Mrs. Spriggs says she can't enough bless you. Though you bought her jackdaw for ten pounds, she's got another; and for all her husband—like a brutal Blue as he is!—beats her once a week for't, the, public spirited, patriotic soul, *will* teach the bird to cry out "Turnstile for ever! Down with the Blues!"

You'll be glad to hear, Sir Curtius, that little Bobby Windfall, the bellows-mender's child, has got over the small-pox, and won't be very much marked. I'm sure you'll be glad of this, from the kind manner with which I saw you kiss the suffering babe when it was so very bad indeed.

The organ that you sent down to the chapel plays very beautifully—very. It quite melts the heart of every true Yellow to listen to it. But I am sorry to say—I blush for my species while I write it—that several stiff-necked Blues stay away from chapel because of that organ: whilst one of 'em, with a sneer that meant I know not what, said, "The organ was a most appropriate gift from you, as no sinner could listen to it without thinking of corruption." What he meant by this 'twould puzzle me to discover.

Your kind hospitality in inviting all of us to your mansion in town whenever we should come to London, will in a few days be rewarded. Chops the pork-butcher, with Brads the blacksmith, and Strong-i'-th-arm the farrier, will be with you—they desire me to say—next week. But pray, Sir Curtius, don't give Chops too much champagne, as he is apt to be very unruly. And Mrs. Brads hopes you'll not let Brads stir in London without you're by his side; she says she depends upon you. As for the farrier's wife, she says you're welcome to keep her husband for a month; only when he comes back, she says she shall expect to see what sort of caps they wear in London.

We are all on the look-out for your first speech, as you promised us on the hustings that it should be a teaser.

I am, Sir Curtius,
Your obedient Servant,
And very humble Voter,
HAMPDEN BRICK.

P.S.—I had almost forgotten to say, that my son Brutus—the youth to whom you jokingly gave a five-pound note to light a cigar with—is now anxious to enter upon the world. Forgive the feelings of a father; but please to write by return of post whether his place will be in the Excise, the Customs, or the Treasury. I suppose we mustn't expect more than two hundred a year *to begin with*.

LETTER X.

ANSWER OF SIR CURTIUS TURNSTILE, M.P., TO HIS CONSTITUENT,
HAMPDEN BRICK.

MY DEAR SIR,—It gives me the deepest pleasure to learn the happiness and tranquillity of the favoured borough of Pottlepot. Bound up as my future public life is with the sympathies of the noble-minded and incorruptible men by whose votes I hold my present exalted situation—my present enviable prominence in the eye of the world—it must be to me a vital delight to know of their felicity. As for the Blues—that desperate faction—that band of little Neros preying on the vitals of their mother-country—but I dismiss them from my thoughts. Contempt relieves me from the excess of indignation.

It is to me a deep happiness to find that I am remembered at your hebdomadal meetings at the Angel. Believe me that every Saturday night I shall spiritually return thanks for the honour that you do me.

The thought that I have awakened a feeling of respect in the bosoms of my fair well-wishers and active supporters of Pottlepot, awards to me the proudest moment of my life. That, with a delicacy which peculiarly distinguishes the disinterested excellence of their sex from the too frequent selfishness of ours, they should give my name to the pledges of their hallowed love, produces feelings in my breast much more easily conceived than *described*. Tell them from me, good Mr. Brick, that whilst

they have complimented me, they have imposed a task upon me—yes, sir, a task; for, henceforth, it must be the peculiar study of my life to do nothing that shall be in the least unworthy of my interesting namesakes. It would, I assure you, have given me great pleasure to be their godfather, but—another time.

I am delighted to learn that the excellent Mrs. Spriggs is in good health. Though decidedly not a woman of high education, she has that instinctive patriotism which made the glory of the ancient matron. She might, without a blush, call the mother of the Gracchi sister. I am more than amused to hear of her jackdaw: and, for her sake, hope for better things from her husband.

Believe me, you only do justice to my feelings when you say that I shall be happy to hear of the recovery of Master Robert Windfall. Though asleep, and in a sad condition when I saw him, I *do* think I never looked upon a more intelligent child. I trust he will become a blessing to his parents, and an honour to the ancient mystery of bellows-mending.

What you tell me respecting the organ, shocks me. That the spirit of party can, in such a subject, find matter for its bitterness, makes one almost despair of human nature. Alas! alas! that even the humble present of a church organ cannot escape the ribaldry of party malice. But nothing, sacred or profane, *does* escape it!

You speak of a projected visit to town by Chops, Brads, and Strong-i'-th'-arm, my worthy and indefatigable constituents. There are no men for whose honesty—whose singleness of purpose—whose primitive simplicity of character—I have a higher admiration; but was there ever anything so unfortunate? At present my mansion is undergoing a thorough repair; filled with carpenters, bricklayers, plasterers—in fact, turned inside out. Hence, to my inexpressible annoyance, I shall not have the pleasure of seeing them under my own roof; and what is worse, I fear—I say, I fear—that unavoidable business will, for a week at least, take me from London. However, pray let me know *what day* they intend to set out. I depend upon you not to fail in this. I have not yet spoken in the House. It is my policy never to throw away powder. But *when* I do make myself heard, depend upon it that Pottlepot will hear the report.

Believe me, my dear Sir,

Yours faithfully ever,

CURTIUS TURNSTILE.

P.S.—As for your son, I think it would be a pity that he should

bury his precocious talents—for I never saw so young a boy smoke with so much maturity—in either the Excise, the Customs, or the Treasury. Take a friend's advice, and bring him up to the bar.

LETTER XI.

FROM A TAILOR FOR HIS BILL.

SIR,—When you reflect upon the time that has passed, since you did me the honour to enter my books, you will, I am sure, acquit me of any desire to appear pressing. Five years, sir, make a long time in the life of a tradesman; the more especially, with business as it has been. Houses thought good, tumbling down like houses of cards; men, considered men of rock, turning out men of straw; bills sent back, and a thousand other bits of bad luck, enough to break the heart of any tradesman. It is now, sir, two-and-thirty years since I entered business; and, in all my life, I never knew so bad a season: bad enough they have been, to be sure, but nothing like the present. There was a time when a tradesman might now and then think of a little profit; but profits in these days!—they don't pay for taking down the shutters.

Therefore, sir, you will, I am sure, pardon me if I solicit you to think of your account. It has been the golden rule of my life never to press a gentleman; but, sir, I am like a peaceable man in a crowd; if I am pushed, I must, whether I will or no, push other people. What has come upon the times I know not; men now ar'n't the men they used to be. I recollect the day when, if a man failed to honour his bill, he was never known to look up again. Now, I'm blessed if he doesn't look all the bolder for it. People have entirely lost the shame they had when I was young in business; and, now-a-days, go into the Gazette as they go to Margate, just to freshen themselves up, and feel all the stronger for it. The truth is—or I should never think of pressing you, sir—there seems to be a want of morality throughout all society. One person puts the evil down to one thing, another to another. A neighbour of mine—a shrewd shoemaker of the old school—swears it's all owing to the Adelaide boots.

For which reason, sir, I hope you will not think me urgent if I call your thoughts to my bill. There was a time, sir, when I never believed I could do such a thing; but, as I've said, I fear

there's no morality left. And how, indeed, should there be? Gentlemen are no longer gentlemen. I have my grandfather's pattern-books by me, sir. He—rest his soul—made for the West End eighty years ago, and, when he died, was buried in superfine black, with twenty coaches to follow. Now, die when I will, I much doubt if—but I have no right to trouble you with my griefs—and so, sir, I will stick to business. In grandfather's time gentlemen were known to be gentlemen by their coats. They walked about clothed and marked as superior people; there was no mistake in them, and the lower orders knew their betters by their satins, their velvets, and their gold lace. Now, sir, how are we to know a gentleman? There is no mark, no difference in him: we can only come at his gentility by his manners; a very roundabout way, sir; and one that has led to a great many mistakes. According to the good old plan, you might stand at your shop-door, and count the real gentlemen as they passed; they wore—if I may say as much—their proper uniform, and the common people paid them proper respect for it. And now, if the grandfathers' ghosts of the gentlemen of our day were to meet their grandsons in Piccadilly or Bond Street, they'd take half of 'em for a set of carters, or drovers, or some such low animals; they wear nothing but sacks or smock-frocks, with cotton buttons to 'em. Every day of his life, a Duke passes my door to Parliament in a pepper-and-salt linsey-woolsey, duffel, flannel sort of thing, that his tailor, try as hard as he may, can't charge him more than two pounds for. And in this condition his Grace goes to make laws in Parliament. After this, I should like to know how it's to be hoped that common folks are to respect the House of Lords? It's flying in the face of nature to expect it.

No, sir, this is the evil; this the abuse that has, as I've often said, sapped the morals of the world, by hustling all folks together in the same cloth and the same cut. It was never intended that the lines of society should be so finely drawn by the tailor, that you could not see them; yet, because it is so, you now have all sorts of discontent, no stability in trade, and no real morals in gentlemen. If the upper classes would only show their true dignity, and return to cut velvet and gold lace, there might even now be some hopes of the country; but while noblemen and gentlemen dress in thirty-shilling coats, there is an end to England. Her real glory set with gold lace. If men never felt the National Debt, it was because they wore embroidered pocket-holes.

You will forgive me troubling you with all this, but I could not think of putting your account into my lawyer's hands without

showing to you the troubles that a tradesman has in these days to fight with.

Hoping you will therefore not take the writ amiss,

I remain your obedient Servant,

SAMUEL STITCHINGTON.

LETTER XII.

THE GENTLEMAN'S ANSWER TO THE TAILOR.

MR. STITCHINGTON,—Is it indeed five years that I have graced your books? How fleet is life—it scarcely appeared to me as many months. Although I have never given you a bill for the amount, how have the years passed by! You will guess my meaning when I assure you it is a theory of mine, that the wings of Time are no other than two large bill-stamps, duly drawn, and accepted. With these he brings his three, six, or nine months into as many weeks. He is continually wasting the sand from his glass, drying the wet ink of promissory notes. But let me not moralise.

You want money, Mr. Stitchington? As I am exactly in the like predicament, you are in a capital condition to sympathise with me. You say you never recollect so bad a season as the present. Of course not; no tradesman ever did: the present season is always the worst of the lot, however bad the others may have been. It says much for the moral and physical strength of such shopkeepers to see them still flourishing from worse to worse: they really seem, like churchyard grass, to grow fat and rank upon decay. You touchingly observe that present profits do not pay for taking down the shutters. My good sir, then why proceed in a ruinous expense? In the name of prudence, why not keep them continually up?

You say you never press a gentleman. Why, in familiar phrase, we never press a lemon; but then we squeeze it most inexorably. That men should go into bankruptcy, yet live and laugh afterwards, is a great proof of the advancing philosophy of our times. A Roman tailor, incapable of meeting his bill, would, heathen-like, have fallen upon his own needle, or hung himself in a bottom of whitey-brown. Now the English tradesman suffers Christian hope to play about his goose, and, fresh from Basinghall Street, dreams of golden eggs.

Whether your neighbour is right in attributing our present

social laxity to the Adelaide boot, is a matter I have no time to consider. The speculation is curious; nevertheless, rigidly to follow up the subject would take us even beyond metaphysics.

You are quite right, Mr. Stitchington, as to the revolutionary effects of the disuse of velvet and gold lace. It is not, I assure you, my fault that they are not again the vogue. If permitted I should be happy to have a dozen suits of you. Fine clothes were a sort of gentleman-made-easy: as you profoundly observe, they at once declared the man. Now, one has to work out the gentleman by one's mode and manners—at times, I assure you, a very difficult labour.

I entirely agree with you as to the cause that has lowered the consequence of Parliament—the vile, plebeian outside of England's senators. I hold it almost impossible that a nobleman can vote with a proper respect for his order unless in full court-suit. There is a dangerous sympathy between common garments and the common people. The Reform Bill had never been carried if Lord Brougham had not worn tweed trousers. Universal Suffrage will be carried—if ever carried—by Peers in check shirts, and, as you pathetically remark, thirty-shilling coats.

I remain your obedient Servant,

WALTER LE DOO.

P.S.—My humanity suggests this advice to you. Don't go to any law expenses; as your letter found me making up my schedule. An odd coincidence; I had just popped down your name as the postman knocked.

LETTER XIII.

FROM A YOUNG GENTLEMAN, DESIROUS OF ENTERING THE ARMY, TO HIS GUARDIAN.

MY DEAR SIR,—In our last conversation, you more than hinted at the necessity of my making choice of a profession. I have again and again considered the important subject, and am at length resolved. Yes; I have made my election—I will become a soldier. I have looked about me, I trust dispassionately; I have weighed and counterweighed all other things with the sword, and found them as nothing to the glorifying steel. Do not believe, sir, that I am biassed in my judgment by the outward show and ceremonious parade of military life; no, sir,

although I can well believe that they have a false influence on the youthful mind, I nevertheless trust that I have too well benefited by your philosophy to confound the noble profession of arms with its holiday blazonry—its review-day splendour. The mere human clod may turn from the plough, beckoned by the fluttering ribands of the recruiting-serjeant—the clown's heart may, to his astonishment, beat to the beating sheepskin, and so beguile him into the ranks—but, sir, I trust that education has taught me a truer valuation of things, enabling me to consider the profession of a soldier in its abstract glory, in its naked loveliness. I look only at the wreath of Cæsar, and care not for the outward splendour of his legions.

Oh, sir, when I read the career of conquerors, I have a strange belief that I was born to be a soldier! I feel such a sympathising throb of heart at the achievements of an Alexander, that all other pursuits, save that of arms, seem to me poor, frivolous, and unworthy of the highest dignity of human nature. To me, soldiers appear the true lords of the earth; and other men, however rich, but as mere greasy serfs—creatures with their souls dwelling darkly in money-bags. The game of war is a pastime for gods, and man is sublimated by its exercise. And then death—death in the bed of glory—with a whole country weeping over our ashes! Is not that a prospect, sir, to quicken the blood of youth, and intoxicate the brain with the sweetest, the noblest draughts of ambition? And then, sir, the laurel, flourishing in everlasting green, and circling our memory for ever!

Nevertheless, should you wish me to delay the purchase of a commission for a few months, I trust you will permit me to visit Germany this autumn to witness the reviews. It is said that the troops expected to assemble will be the flower of the world. I know not, too, how many thousands. What a sublime spectacle! In their different uniforms—with their banners, their artillery, and their leaders—many of them with the history of the last wars cut in scars upon their bodies! I do not think the world can show a nobler sight. So superhuman in its power—so awful in its beauty!

And now, sir, having freely communicated to you my desire to enter the army, permit me to assure you that I shall devote my entire soul to the study of my duties as a soldier. They have, I know, their severity: but have they not also their rewarding sweetness? Yes, sir, for how delicious must it be—the heat and fury of the battle over—to solace the wounded, to protect the helpless! In those moments the noblest emotions of our common nature must be awakened; they must repay the warrior for *toil*, *privation*, suffering unutterable. Yes, sir—to know that in

such an hour we are lessening the anguish of a fellow-creature, must for a time elevate us beyond the common impulses of poor humanity.

Anxiously awaiting your reply—and with it, as I fondly believe, your consent—

I remain, your affectionate ward,

ARTHUR BATTWIG.

P.S.—Do not think, my dear sir, that the opinions of a certain young lady, who has always declared she would marry no one but a soldier, have had the least influence upon my determination. No, sir ; not the least, I assure you.

LETTER XIV.

ANSWER OF THE GUARDIAN TO THE YOUNG GENTLEMAN.

MY DEAR ARTHUR,—I thought more highly of your discrimination. I believed that you knew me better than to make so foolish a proposition. My opinions on war and its instruments are, I know, not the opinions of the world ; it would save the world—I am vain enough to think—much guilt, much misery, if they were so.

You, doubtless, believe your letter the result of an honest enthusiasm ; and yet, to my fancy, it is nothing more than the folly of a boy, who, unconscious of his prompter, writes with a fiend dictating at his elbow. Yes, my boy, a fiend ; he is too often busy among us—one of the vilest and most mischievous demons of all the brood of wickedness. To be sure, he visits men not in his own name—oh no ! he comes to them in the finest clothes and under the prettiest alias. He is clothed in gay colours—has yards of gold trimming about him—a fine feather in his cap—silken flags fluttering over him—music at his heels—and his lying, swindling name is—Glory. Strip the thing so called, and how often will you find the abhorred nakedness of a demon ? Be assured of it, fife and drum make the devil's choicest music. He blows and beats—for, being a devil, he can do this at the same time—and makes the destructive passions of men twist and wriggle in the hearts of even peaceful folk, and with the magic of his tattoo drives them on to mischief. You know, people say I have strange, violent thoughts. Well,

I think every sheep whose skin is turned into drum-parchment, has been sacrificed not to the gods but devils.

You tell me that you are smitten with glory in the abstract—with its naked honour. Pooh ! like a poor-souled footman, you are content to take the blows for the fineness of the livery.

You say, that when you read the history of conquerors, you yearn to become a soldier. Well, I dispute it not ; there have been men made soldiers by tyranny and wrong, whose memories may, like the eternal stars, shine down upon us ; these men may be envied. But I, too, have read the lives of conquerors ; and, as I live, they no more tempted me to emulate them, than the reading of the Newgate Calendar would make me yearn to turn footpad or housebreaker.

At best, soldiers are the evils of the earth. The children of human wrong, and human weakness. Understand me, I would not have men ground arms, and, with quaker-like submission, cry "friend" to the invader. Nevertheless, do not let us prank up a dire necessity with all sorts of false ornament, and glorify wholesale homicide. You say war is the pastime of gods. Homer tells us as much. And pretty gods they were who played at the sport ! In my time, I have known many men who, for very humbly imitating them in some of their amusements, have died on the gallows or withered on board the hulks. I trust the time will come when it will bring as great shame to men to mimic Mars, as it now deals upon the other sex to imitate Venus.

You talk glibly enough of the bed of glory. What is it ? A battle-field, with thousands blaspheming in agony about you ! Your last moments sweetened, it may be, with the thought that somewhere on the field lies a bleeding piece of your handiwork—a poor wretch in the death-grasp of torture ! Truly, that is a bed of greater glory which is surrounded by loving hearts—by hands uplifted in deep, yet cheerful prayer. There are thoughts too—it is my belief—better, sweeter far than thoughts of recent slaying, to help the struggling soul from out its tenement.

You talk, too, of the nation's tears ! In what museum does the nation keep her pocket-handkerchiefs ? Depend upon it, nations that love to fight, are not the nations that love to weep. I grant it ; many a fine, simple fellow, has died in the belief of being wept over by his country, who has nevertheless been shamefully defrauded of his dues. My dear boy, never sell your life for imaginary drops of water. And then you rave about laurel—an accursed plant of fire and blood. Count up all the crowns of Cæsar, and for the honest, healthful service of man, are they worth one summer cabbage ?

You would wish to see the German review—you think it so noble a sight? Be assured, if you can teach your eyes to look through the spectacles of truth, there cannot be a sadder, a more rueful exhibition—one reflecting more upon the true dignity of human nature—one more accusatory of the wisdom and goodness of man—than thousands of men dressed and harnessed, and nicely schooled for the destruction of their fellow creatures. All their finery, all their trappings, are to me but the gim-crackery of the father of wickedness. In my time, I have seen thousands of soldiers drawn up, with a bright sky shining above them; and I have thought them a foul mass—a blot—a shame upon the beautiful earth—an affront to the beneficence of Heaven! But then, I have odd thoughts—strange opinions.

You say it will be sweet, the battle over, to solace the wounded. My dear boy, it will be sweeter far not to begin the battle at all. It may be very humane to apply the salve after you have dealt the gash,—but surely it would be better wisdom, truer humanity, to inflict no hurt. And, in time, men will learn this truth; they *are* learning it; and as I would not see you in a profession which I trust is speedily becoming bankrupt, you will never, with my consent, purchase into the army.

Your affectionate friend,

BENJAMIN ALLEPEACE.

LETTER XV.

FROM A MAIDEN AUNT TO A NIECE ON THE IMPRUDENCE OF MARRIAGE.

MY DEAR CLARIBEL,—I should ill acquit myself of the duties of an aunt—should show myself wickedly ungrateful for the goodness that has hitherto preserved me from the cares and frivolities of the marriage-state—were I to see you, my sister's child, ready to throw yourself into a bottomless pit, and never so much as scream to save you. It was only yesterday that Doctor Prunes acquainted me with your headstrong passion for an unworthy creature of a man. Although I had grouse for dinner—and you know how I love it!—I never ate so little; and, in the evening, revoked twice in only three rubbers. What with the news of Doctor Prunes and the tooth-ache, I have scarcely slept all night, and at breakfast, instead of buttered toast, absolutely gave chicken to the parrot. May you, even at the twelfth hour, prove worthy of all I suffer for you.

You are only three-and-twenty, and yet, with a forwardness that makes me blush for the true dignity of womanhood, you already think of marriage! I had hoped that my lessons of morality would have taught you better things. I had flattered myself that, strengthened by my principles, you would have risen above the too common weakness that unites a woman to a creature in every way inferior to herself, whatever the said creatures, in the fulness of their impudence, may trumpet to the contrary. I do not dispute that men may be necessary in the world; but, at the best, they are only necessary evils. It is thus that every really sensible woman should consider them. In the vulgar attribute of brutes—mere muscular strength—they are certainly our superiors; but how immeasurably beneath us are they in all that constitutes true greatness—in delicacy, liberality, tenderness, friendship, fortitude, and taciturnity! And, in their hypocrisy, they confess as much; for they call us angels—(though I am proud to say, no man ever so insulted *my* understanding)—yes, angels, that they may make us slaves. How any woman can read the marriage ceremony without having her eyes opened to the real intentions of the creatures, is to me most wonderful. Love, honour, and obey! My blood burns to think of it! To the ears of a sensible woman every syllable rattles like a dog-chain.

I did think that my own Claribel—taught by my precept and example—would as soon have put her finger into a rat-trap as a wedding-ring. I did believe that you would consider all the fine things that men utter as nothing more than the false notes of a bird-catcher; mere sounds to bring our free minds “from the heaven of high thoughts,” as some poet says, and shut ‘em up in cages. How women can listen to a jargon of loves and doves, is melancholy to think of. A woman of really strong mind hates Cupids as she hates cockroaches.

Nevertheless, my dear, I can sympathise with human infirmity. Everybody is not born to keep a heart of virgin ice that, pressed as it may be, no pressing can melt. Still, there is nothing like a diversion of thought to cure a hurt. It is wonderful how a wound heals, if we never think of it. Therefore, return his letters to the man who would ensnare you; and, forgetful of the cares and littlenesses of marriage, give up all your thoughts to astronomy. It is a charming study, and presents a more ennobling field for the human mind than the small limits of wedlock. How insignificant seems the wife, studious of the goings-out and comings-in of a mere husband, compared to the nobler woman who knows all about the Great and Little Bear! How petty the noblest house in the noblest square to the House of Jupiter

or Mars—how perplexing the cares of children, to the lofty contemplation of the Via Lactea (known, as Doctor Prunes says, to the lower orders as the Milky Way) ;—how insulting to the true greatness of the female mind the smallness of the wedding-ring, when the ring of Saturn may be all her own, with no incumbrance of Saturn himself !

Or if, Claribel, you want enthusiasm for the stars, why, is there not geology ? Properly considered, can there be a more delightful employment for the female mind than to settle the ages of things that vulgar souls care nothing about ? Who would not turn from the cries of a nursery to the elevating sounds of felspar and quartz ? What really great woman would study the mere heart of a mere man, when she might discover fossil shrimps and caterpillars in marble ? No. Woman will never assert her true dignity till she can wisely choose between the two.

Then, after some ten or fifteen years—for it is a study too rashly submitted to the young—botany may disclose its lovely mysteries. How delightful, what true freedom for the human soul, to be exempt from cares of husband and family, and to know everything about the operations of pollen ! But I am incautiously anticipating a subject reserved for your maturer years.

Break, then, the chains with which mere tyrant man would bind you, and—defying the slavery of conjugal life—live like Diana,
And your still affectionate Aunt,

LUCRETIA DRAGONMOUTH.

P.S.—Is it true that the wife of Doctor Beetlebrow is really dead ? I wouldn't utter a word against the departed ; I should hope not, but—is she really dead ?

LETTER XVI.

THE NIECE'S ANSWER.

MY DEAR AUNT,—How can I ever express my gratitude to you, how repay the care with which you seek to gather me to that sisterhood of which Lucretia Dragonmouth is the crowning rose ? Alas, madam ! I feel my unworthiness ! I should but bring a scandal on the community by the frivolity of my words and the earthliness of my desires. I have the greatest respect for Diana, but feel it impossible to become lady's-maid to her.

Therefore, dear Aunt, you must even leave me to my headlong fate; and unbroken rest, heartier meals, and successful rubbers, be your continual reward.

It would ill become my inexperience to dispute the sentence you pass upon the other sex. Men are, doubtless, all you say of them: therefore, forewarned by your opinion, I shall endeavour to support the necessary evil that may fall to my lot with all the fortitude I may. As for the marriage ceremony, I have read it again and again, and such is the hopeless perversity of my taste—think it the loveliest composition! To my ears, it murmurs the very music of Paradise.

I feel the full force of what you say about astronomy. No doubt, its study might relieve a wounded heart, but then as I feel no wound that is not most delicious, why should I go to the stars to get rid of it? Yes, madam, I can forgive your talking about the stars. *You* have never seen my Alfred's eyes! No doubt the Great and Little Bear have their attractions; but you never saw my Alfred's moustache!

(Geology, too, may be fascinating. It may be musical to talk of felspar and quartz; to seek for fossil bees that made honey for the pre-Adamites; but you never heard my Alfred sing *Love in thine eyes*—you never felt the pressure of his throbbing hand!

As for botany, I really feel its influence in a manner I never felt before; for I am just now called to choose my bridal wreath of orange flowers, and must therefore abruptly conclude—

Your affectionate Niece,

CLARIBEL MAYDEW.

P.S.—It is not true that Mrs. Beetlebrow is dead; though once she was given over by her physicians. Ah, my dear Aunt! how foolish it was of you thirty years ago to quarrel with the dear doctor, and only—as I've heard—for treading on the toes of a nasty little pug!

LETTER XVII.

FROM A GENTLEMAN TO HIS FRIEND, ENTREATING HIM TO
RENOUNCE THE BOTTLE.

MY DEAR PETER,—May I, by a friendship of thirty years' growth, be permitted to address you on your faults, or, rather, your fault? for it is so capacious that it swallows every other error; in the same way that boa constrictors gulp toads and other unsightly creatures of smaller dimensions. May I venture to remonstrate with you on—well, it must be said—your habitual drunkenness? Alas! my friend, to what a condition has this folly, this wickedness reduced you! This morning only, I saw a full-grown cucumber in a bottle: there is nothing in the object; it is a common-place, to be seen in the windows of every pickle-merchant: and yet did that imprisoned cucumber touch my heart, and bring pathetic moisture into my eyes; for by the tyranny of association, it made me think of my forlorn friend. Yes; looking at that cucumber, trained to grow in its glass prison, did I behold in it the hopeless condition of Peter Rubygill! There he is—thought I—there is Peter, and who shall deliver him? And how, alas! does that plethoric gourd fully declare the story of my friend! How, like him, was it insinuated in its green youth—a very sucker—into the bottle's throat; and how, when there, was it made to grow and swell, until far too large to be withdrawn, it possessed the whole of the bottle, and was then cut off for ever from the vine that had cherished it! And is it not thus, Peter, with a doomed drunkard? Does he not enter the bottle in the greenness of his days, and though he may again and again escape from the thing that threatens to inclose him, at length is it not impossible for him to get away? Habit makes him swell, and there is no hope for him; cut off from the genial world, he has no other dwelling-place than a bottle. Verily, Peter Rubygill, Bacchus—like a pickle-merchant—has his bottled cucumbers, and you are of them!

And yet, Peter, I would fain hope for you. In the name of all that is great and beautiful in the world, why seal your eyes to its grandeur and loveliness, why walk with your drowsy brain in a fog, when, touched by the light of beauty, it might answer the touch with most delicious music? What, in truth,

can you know of the bounty and magnificence showered about you? No more than a silly fly, that, finding itself in the palace of a king, sips and sips, and tumbles headlong into the first syrup it may light upon. Have I not seen you leaden-eyed—clay-pated—almost dumb with pain hammering at your temples—degraded by nausea tugging at your stomach—your hand shaking like a leaf—your mouth like the mouth of an oven—and your tongue, I am sure of it, like burnt shoe-leather? And for what, Peter Rubygill? For some six hours' madness the night before?

You were left a comfortable competence. Where is it now? Gone. The bottle is the devil's crucible, and melts all!

You were tolerably good-looking. And now is your countenance but as a tavern sign; where numberless little imps—liberated by drawn corks—continue to give a daily touch and touch of red, proud of their work, as portrait-painters to the devil himself.

There was a time when your word was true as gold. And now, upon whom can you pass it? From the mouth of a drunkard, the most solemn promise is no better than the best-made bad money: it may pass for a time, but is certain to be nailed to the world's counter at last.

You had friends. But there is a mortal fever in the reputation of a drunkard, and sober men wisely avoid it.

You have a wife. Has she a husband? No: She vowed to love a man, and you are a liquor-cask. Can you expect her affection? You might as reasonably expect her wedding-ring to hoop a wine-barrel.

You have children. Poor things! They see a satyr sprawl and reel before them; and, in their innocence, blush not as yet to call the creature father!

But, my dear Peter, there is yet hope. Learn to love home. Avoid the tavern. It is in the tavern-cellar that the devil draws up his army array against the brains and good resolves of men. It is there that he reviews his legions of bottles, and prepares them for the attack upon weak humanity. But, arm yourself, Peter; meet the assailants with cold water; and, in the fight, you shall have the earnest prayers of your old friend,

CORYDON RIVERS.

LETTER XVIII.

THE ANSWER.

MY DEAR CORYDON,—*You* talk of the beauty of the earth—*you* talk of the magnificence of the world! Why, then, let moles sing psalms to the moon, and that hermit in feathers, the screech-owl, tune a ditty to the noonday sun. The bottle is the true philosopher's microscope, and shows him worlds within worlds that such as you, poor naked-eyed wretches, never had the heart to dream of.

You say that you have seen me with my brain in a fog. Poor ignorance! After a night's—say three nights'—continual happiness, you little know the bliss I walk in. You little think of the genius within me, that turns your scoundrel streets of London into the abodes of the blessed. What see I there but love and truest brotherhood? The very knockers wink and laugh at me; and roses and honeysuckles grow about every lamp-post. There are, I know, weak, puling creatures, who talk of headaches; but these are milksop neophytes, not yet of the true priesthood of our order. What if now and then I have a twinge? Think you I accuse the bottle? I should be a villain to do so. No: it's the d—d east wind.

As for the fortune that was left me, it is true I have invested it in the bottle; and, oh! what compound interest have I had for my money! Whilst you would count every rascal guinea, and, after you had counted all, would break into a cold sweat to think there was no more, *I*—seated on my tavern-throne—have had wealth that would confound all arithmetic. All about me has been glorious riches! I have drunk out of hollowed diamonds, and spat in gold-dust.

It is my darling faith that every bottle contains in it a pair of beautiful wings, to lift poor man above the gutter-mud which this sober world is made of. A pair of wings! And I, like Mercury, can't do without three pair.

I have somewhere read it, at school—ha! Rivers, sometimes at the heel of the night I see you again in your green jacket, and I sit and enjoy myself, and let the sweetest of tears run down my nose—well, never mind that—I read it at old Canetwig's—that Jupiter fastened the earth to heaven with a gold chain. All a *flam*, my dear boy! It was no chain, but a

splendid, a most magnificent line of linked bottles. The higher you climb, the further you are from this vagabond world. Pity, my dear fellow—pity it is, that the road is so devilish slippery!

You say I had friends. *Had!* I have millions. *Ha!* my good creature—for you are good, I believe, sober and stupid as you are,—you don't know the philanthropy that a corkscrew lets out upon me. I may have been ruffled; may I be pardoned for it, I may now and then have thought harshly of my poor erring fellow creatures, when—pop!—out comes the cork, and the wine, as it bubbles forth, speaks pacifyingly, soothingly. Again—again! The bottle cooes like any dove; and I have not listened to it above two or three hours, when I feel myself turned into one large lump of human honey! And then these two hands of mine are multiplied ten million times, and I shake hands with every man, woman, and child upon this beautiful earth, my creditors included.

But all this, though much, is nothing to the wisdom—the knowledge—that drink so subtly lets in upon poor, darkened man. What is it? You have studied these things; but then you have studied them with a dry, dusty throat; and so, can know no more of the true operations of the intellect—glorious intellect—of majestic man, than a monkey knows of a steam-engine. Well, what is it? I say, what is it? *Ha!* my dear soul, if you had only two bottles of the stuff that is now shining before me—shining like a lion's eye—you'd know all about it. Then you'd know metaphysics—that is, metaphysics assisted by glorious wine—here's a bumper to you, old cock! God bless your little green jacket!—metaphysics is this, as you'd know. Every man has an angel within him. Lord love us! and yet, sometimes, we use one another as though we lodged nothing but devils. Well, as I said, every man has an angel within him; and this angel—poor thing!—you dull, sober, miserly fellows, board in the most rascally way; giving him nothing generous to drink, or just wetting his lips, and there an end. And what's the consequence? Why, he tells you nothing worth knowing—just casts up your accounts for you—gives you a nudge when stocks are going, or some small Chandler matter of the kind; but, with a noble resentment of your shabbiness, he does nothing more. What does he to me, who know how to treat him? I give him bumper after bumper,—and my brain feels him expanding his wings—(you, poor wretch! don't know that he has wings)—yes, bumper after bumper, until, at last, my angel takes up his golden fiddle, and plays me such a tune (I can feel him rosining his bow at this minute,)—such a tune, that as it sounds I catch

all sorts of wisdom ; thoughts like diamonds, bright and everlasting !

Ha ! ha ! he's playing now, and I drop the pen to listen, and feel myself an emperor.

* * * * *

———— MY DEAR CORYDON, — Don't mind the stuff I've scrawled above—for I've been mad this month past. I am just arrested. You'll find me at —, Chancery-lane. Come, come—for God's sake, bring fifty pounds, and you will everlastingly oblige

Your wretched friend,
PETER RUBYGILL.

LETTER XIX.

FROM A COUNTRY ACTOR TO A LONDON MANAGER, FOR AN
ENGAGEMENT.

DEAR SIR,—It may probably have escaped your recollection, that in the year —, you did me the high honour to pay me a very flattering compliment on my acting—imperfect as it was—of *Catesby*. You then said, sir,—and I have treasured the words—that should it be ever your destiny to manage a London Theatre, you would be only too happy to make me one of your little set. Yes, sir, little set were the words ! I am, indeed, sir, most happy to find by the newspapers that that time has arrived. It is a great day for the profession. Such an event has long been wanted ; and at length Shakespear — that really great creature !—will have fair play done him. How happy, indeed, shall I be, if permitted in the smallest degree to assist in that national triumph !

To return, sir, to the compliment you so kindly paid to my *Catesby*. That, sir, was ten years ago, and—but “on their own merits modest men are dumb”—I flatter myself that an unceasing attention to my profession, and more especially to the advice you were pleased to give me, has made me not less worthy of applause. You may forget that advice—I never shall. The *Horatio* had been arrested coming to the theatre, and I studied the part from scene to scene. It was where *Hamlet* discovers *Ophelia's* death, and falls upon *Horatio's* neck ! Pardon me ! but can I ever forget the point—the telling point—you made there ? Never ! It was then you said to me, “My good sir, I have been

much pleased with your attention—very much pleased—you are in the rough, very much in the rough at present; in fact you know nothing: but keep your eye on me—do as I do—exactly as I do, and you can't be wrong." From that moment, sir, I set you up as my model, and—but friends are partial—I have been told that the resemblance between our styles of acting is extraordinary.

You may possibly have forgotten me, and therefore will excuse it, if I remind you that my figure is good, indeed much improved since we met. My voice is powerful; its intonation—I have been told—like Kean's (of course I mean Edmund),—my face expressive, and capable of any sort of making up—and for my study, I can swallow anything. With all this, sir, I shall be very happy to come in as one of the team. Yes, sir, all I want is opportunity; the chance of playing before a London audience, quite convinced that the rest is in myself, and *must come out*.

On the other side I forward a list of parts. I have gained—I may say it—great reputation in the provinces in all of them. The *Stranger* is a favourite bespeak part of mine—and my *Claude Melnotte* a great hit with all the boarding-schools. Some critics have given the palm to my *Macbeth*, and some to my *Jonathan Bradford*. If I may be allowed to have any opinion, I think them both equally good in their way, though I need not say to you, requiring different touches from the artist. Still, he must be something of a painter who can use the delicate camel-hair of that great creature Shakespear, and the four-pound brush of the melodramatist. My sailors, too, have been accounted remarkably good; especially at the seaports. I have played *William* in the Surrey trash of *Black-Eyed Susan*, in a way to make T. P. Cooke shake in his shoe-buckles. I could say more, but it is painful to speak of one's-self. I therefore take the liberty of forwarding with this, a small book in which you will find a great number of criticisms carefully pasted, from the first provincial papers of the day. They have been preserved by my wife; for though not insensible of the power of the press, I myself make it a point never to look into a newspaper.

Speaking of my wife,—can you find a corner for her? A clever little chambermaid—sings well and all that—and a faultless breeches figure. It is often difficult for a husband to speak of a wife's merits, but sometimes it must be done. The acting of Mrs. Wilkins is wonderfully natural. She has it born in her what other actresses have too often to labour for. She has such impulse! The French actors have a better word for it—*abandon*—yes, *abandon* is the word. Well, sir, other actresses

may obtain this from art; now Mrs. Wilkins is abandoned by nature.

I have not spoken of salary, nor will I. On that point, sure am I, we shall be unanimous. All I want is London gaslight, for, indeed, I am tired of acting as I have too long acted, under a bushel. In a word, sir, "I am a poor man who'd fain grow richer," and hoping to be—in your old and long-prized words—"one of your little set," I remain, yours truly,

BULCAZEM WILKINS.

LETTER XX.

THE MANAGER'S ANSWER.

SIR,—It has been my misfortune to play with so many provincial *Catesbys*—a part, by the way, singularly neglected in all country theatres—that, at the date you name, it is almost impossible for me to have any recollection of your merits. I think, however, you were then the sucking actor who entirely marred my fifth act. I think Wilkins was the name. If you are, I am glad to hear that you are improved; though I would rather have that fact certified by any other authority. If, however, you are the Wilkins I mean, you have at least this consolation—worse you cannot be. It is quite true that I have entered on the arduous task of management, and I cannot consent to make that task more irksome by adding to my difficulties, on the strength of a promise made I know not when—where—or to whom. I am afraid that frequent acts of civility when playing in the provinces have been sadly misinterpreted; for you are at least the twentieth applicant that has applied to me upon the encouragement of some vague compliment meant for nothing—nothing, I assure you.

And now, sir, I will give you a small piece of valuable counsel. You are an actor (at least you say so); well, never promise what you will do when you become a manager. You praise an author's piece, and regret that you have no power to bring it out—(if you had, ah! how happy you should be!)—well, sir, you praise it and think you have done with it. It may be, in ten or fifteen years' you become a manager, and back comes the piece to you with your own commendatory letter, and the pest of an author claiming the fulfilment of your implied service. It might be difficult, but were my time to come over again, I should in these matters endeavour to speak the truth.

Never say what you'll do when you become a manager. It is just like a Prince of Wales promising what he'll do when he becomes King: flummery, sir—polite flummery.

With your great natural qualifications of figure, face, and voice, it would only distress me to see such fine advantages thrown away upon mere utility, could I even offer you that—and anything beyond is entirely impossible. You are not a man for the team; no, but a racer that should start upon his own account. There is, no doubt, a plate for you somewhere, though not at my theatre.

Your list of parts is certainly very long. You seem to have played in everything except one piece—*The Bashful Man*.

I have not read the criticisms you sent, but I at once detected the source of their eulogy—tobacco and gin-and-water. Such criticisms must be valuable, for they have every appearance of having cost you a great deal.

Your praise of Mrs. Wilkins does honour to your feelings as a man and a husband; but the chambermaids are filled.

Your obedient servant,

MAGNUS PUFF.

LETTER XXI.

FROM A POOR RELATION.

MY DEAR COUSIN.—Although so many years have passed since we last met—nay, since we last corresponded—I feel that I should do much wrong to the goodness of your heart, to the truth and dignity of our early friendship, did I fail to write to you in my present strait. Did I listen to the sarcasms of the worldly and ungenerous, I should suffer in silence—but my soul revolts from their harsh, cold creed, that confounds prosperity with selfishness, and makes a golden barrier between kin and kin. I fear it may be too true that a profitable commerce with the world is apt to change some men—but there are others whose lustre of soul nothing can dim. Let them possess the diamonds of Golconda, and their minds would remain to them priceless and unchangeable.

Though there has been silence between us, it has often delighted me to learn in this obscure nook that you were still increasing in worldly goods and in the respect of all men. I have sent you no line, yet have I spiritually again and again congratulated you on the happiness that a wise enjoyment of

wealth bestows—on the enviable power of doing good to all around you. For I remembered the candour and generosity of your soul, and knew that riches would be only acceptable to you as bestowing a power to assist your fellow-creatures; that you would consider gold, not as the familiar of avarice, but as the beneficent charm of a fairy, by which you might profit and delight your species.

There are foolish gossiping folks, whose pleasure it seems to be to set friends against friends: people, whose happiness (at least it would almost appear so) is to find or make a flaw in the best of hearts. Had I listened to them, I should have believed that you were desirous of forgetting all your poorer kindred; that you looked upon your good fortune as giving you the best right to deny your own blood; that, in a word, being rich, you were no longer of the family—that you had, in fact, been altogether new made by Plutus and had no relationship whatever with the Robinses. But how base, how wicked would it have been in me, to believe in such a scandal!

"He has never written to any of you," these people would say—"depend upon it, he looks upon you all as a disgrace—as blots upon his finer fortune." But I knew too well that every moment of your time was occupied—that you had so many demands upon your hours that folks living in the quiet of the country have no thought of. "Again," I've said, "if cousin doesn't write to us, you must remember we never write to him." To this they've answered, "that was a different matter; for as you were the rich party, you ought to write first." A sort of argument, I must say, I never could see the reason of; for suppose you a thousand times richer than you are, what difference should that make? Lord bless us! as if your poor father and my dear mother—fond brother and sister as they were—would ever have thought about their children standing on any ceremony with one another!

You will, I know, be sorry to hear that I have had a great loss—for me, a very great one. The house of Flimsy and Straw stopped payment last week, and the consequence is, that I am at the present moment without a penny. Nevertheless, it isn't so bad as it seems; for they do say that the estate will pay some day ten shillings and odd in the pound. But the worst of it is, I am not able from this accident to meet two or three matters which are fast pressing upon me; and therefore in my difficulty must beg your assistance. I would not do so, were I not certain that it would even annoy you if I were to apply to anybody else. I know your heart so well that you would never forgive me for

hesitating. It would—I am sure you would feel it so—be an affront to you as a friend and a kinsman.

How delightful then is it, on a stroke of ill-fortune like the present, to know that we have a relative—a flourishing, cordial soul—who looks upon himself as the steward of Providence; who is too happy to show his gratitude for prosperity, by shaking some few crumbs from his sumptuous, loaded board to his poor relations: who acknowledges the solemn claims of blood, not alone with lip-acknowledgment, but with a sympathy that elevates “him that gives and him that takes.”

I will by the next post send you all particulars.

Your affectionate Cousin,

EDWARD ROBINS.

LETTER XXII.

THE ANSWER.

DEAR COUSIN,—You are quite right. Although so many years have gone by since you have written, you, nevertheless, only pay me my due, when you believe that I am by no means forgetful of my father's relations. As for the sarcasms and ill-words of people, I have too much faith in my own motives to attend to them. You will always find idle—too often, disreputable—persons who make the high and the wealthy their licensed game. It is enough to be rich, to be abused by them. Philosophy, however, and my bank-book, have taught me to despise them. Not that I am a jot altered from the time when we were intimate; certainly not—nevertheless, the prejudices of the world require a certain dignity of appearance that the vulgar mistake for pride and ostentation.

I am pleased to find that, though we have not corresponded, you have, nevertheless, not forgotten me. I assure you, many a time, worried and oppressed by the toil of a commercial life, I have, in thought, visited your beautiful little house—(ha! my dear friend, if we only knew it, in such humility is true happiness!)—and have wished that I could change all the glitter and ceremony of life for the simple, yet substantial happiness of that homestead. You are quite right in believing that I consider wealth as only an agent for the ease and felicity of those about me—that is, if I really had the wealth which the world, out of its ignorance or waywardness, is pleased to credit me.

Forget my poorer kindred? Impossible! No man, who, by

the superiority of his talents and the energy of his character made an advance in the world, was ever yet permitted to forget them. *They* take too good care of that. It is true, my dear friend, that you and I have not corresponded ; but you little know, how frequently, and how very peculiarly, I have been made to remember the existence of the Robinses. As for being new-made by Plutus, I am sure they have believed in such a re-creation, for they have again and again addressed me as one lump of gold—again and again would have been happy to change me among them.

They who have maligned me by urging that I considered the poverty of my relations as a disgrace, know little of my true judgment. I have, it is true, been compelled to look upon it as a great misfortune, inasmuch as I have too frequently felt its influence. Your allusion to my father and your mother touches me—takes me back again to the days of my youth—when I thought the world was all that we read of in fairy books. Ha ! my dear cousin, that was, indeed, a time ! Pity is it that so sweet a dream should give way to so hard and cold a reality.

Your news about Flimsy and Straw affects me deeply. I would have wished to keep the ill-tidings from you, but the truth is, I fear that I shall be seriously compromised by their failure. Very seriously, indeed. I have been engaged in a mining speculation, in which—but I will not distress you with what I fear may be the result. Not that I have to dread anything fatal—certainly not ; nevertheless, I fear—indeed, I am sure, that I shall be so driven into a corner that my heart will not be allowed to act as it could wish ; and therefore—but you must take courage, my dear friend, and not suffer yourself to be dismayed by what may end in, comparatively, a trifle.

I know you think me rich—very rich. Well, I am not ungrateful. Notwithstanding, a man may be Croesus himself, yet not have a shilling in his pocket. This may appear strange to you ; but nevertheless, men with large floating capital—but you *must* understand—I hav'n't at this present moment a shilling that I can fairly lay my hands upon.

Otherwise, as a friend, as a relative, it would have given me the greatest pleasure to see you through this little difficulty. I am not insensible of family ties—I should hope not : but what are family ties with money at its present price in the market ? Nevertheless, let your motto be, *Nil desperandum*, and believe me,

Yours truly,

JOSEPH GOODENOUGH.

LETTER XXIII.

FROM A WIDOWER TO A WIDOW, WITH AN OFFER OF MARRIAGE.

MY DEAR MADAM,—Your kind looks and cordial words have accompanied me all the way home, and—the truth is, I write this before going to bed ; I shall sleep the more soundly for having the matter off my mind. It is true, we have met but once ; but we are both of us at that rational point of life, when people know the most value of time ; and as all ceremony is but an idle waste of existence, I beg herewith to offer you my hand, and, with it, though I have been married before, an entire heart. There are hearts, madam, allow me to say, all the better for keeping ; they become mellowed, and more worth a woman's acceptance than the crude, unripe things, too frequently gathered—as children gather green fruit—to the discomfort of those who obtain them. I have been married to one wife, and know enough of the happiness of wedlock to wish it to be continued in another. The best compliment I can pay to the dear creature now in heaven, is to seek another dear creature here on earth. She was a woman of admirable judgment : and her portrait—it hangs over my chimney-piece—smiles down upon me as I write. She seems to know my thoughts, and to approve of them. I said, madam, she was a woman of excellent judgment.

My means are tolerably good ; more than sufficient for my widowed state. Of the truth of this, your solicitor shall have the most satisfactory proof. I have also heard—casually heard—that fortune has not, my dear madam, been blind to your deserts, and has awarded you more than enough to keep the wolf from the door. I rejoice at this ; for whatever might be my disappointment, I would not entail upon you the inconvenience of marriage unaccompanied by an agreeable competence. What is enough for one—it has been said—is enough for two. But this is the ignorance of Cupid, who never could learn figures. Now Hymen—as you must know, dear madam—is a better arithmetician ; taught as he is by butcher and baker. Love in a cottage is pretty enough for girls and boys ; but men and women like a larger mansion, with coach-house and stabling.

You may urge against me, that I have incumbrances. By no means. My daughter having married a beggar, has ceased to have any natural claim upon me. If I am civil to her, it is solely *from a certain weakness of heart* that I cannot wholly conquer :

and something too, moreover, to keep up appearances with a meddling world. I have told her that she is never to expect a farthing from me, and I should despise myself not to be a man of my word.

I have, too, a son ; but when I tell you that I have once paid his debts, incurred in his wild minority, you will allow that, except my blessing, and, at times, my paternal advice, he can expect nothing more. I know the duties of a father, and will never satisfy the cravings of a profligate. Nevertheless, he is my own son ; and whatever may be his need, my blessing and my counsel he shall never want.

My health, madam, has ever been excellent. I have worn like rock. I have heard of such things as nerves, but believe it my fate to have been born without any such weaknesses. I speak thus plainly of essentials, as you and I, madam, are now too wise to think consumption pretty—to tie ourselves to ill-health, believing it vastly interesting. I can ride forty miles a day, and take a hedge with any fellow of five-and-twenty. I say, I speak of these things, that you may know me as I am. Moreover, I assure you I eat with my own teeth, and grow my own hair. Besides this, I am only two-and-fifty.

What do you say, madam ? As for vices, as I am an honest man, I do not think I can lay any to my charge. I may have my human weaknesses—such, indeed, as I have touched upon above ; but, madam, it has ever been my study through life to be respectable. I have the handsomest pew in the church, and don't owe any man a shilling.

Well, my dear madam, it is getting late, and I must conclude. I hate to be out of bed after eleven—it is now past twelve. Hence, you must perceive how very much I am interested in this business. In another ten minutes I shall be asleep, and dreaming of you. May I wake to find my dream—for I know what it will be—a reality !

If our solicitors are mutually satisfied, will you name the day ? I am superstitious about days—say, then, say Thursday week, and believe me your devoted lover, till death,

NICHOLAS BLACKTHORN.

P.S. May I see you to-morrow ?

LETTER XXIV.

THE WIDOW'S ANSWER.

SIR,—Your favour of last night has, I own, surprised me. What! after one meeting, and that at a card-party, to make such an offer! Well to be sure, you men are strange creatures! What, indeed, could you have seen in my conduct to think I could look over such boldness?

As for the rational point of life you speak of, I must confess I know not when that exactly occurs; do you think it—at least with women—at two-and-thirty; or if not, may I beg to know what age you consider me? Perhaps, though, my early and irreparable loss may have brought a look of premature age upon me. It is very possible—for what a man he was!

As for what you say about hearts, sir, I know but little; I only know the one I have lost. If I did pluck it green, like the winter apples in my store-room, it grew riper and riper in my care.

You say your wife's portrait smiled while you wrote. *His* dear miniature is now before me. I think I see the tears starting through the ivory as I look upon the precious features. If he ever could have frowned, surely he would frown now to think—but I will not pursue the theme.

As to your means, sir, I am happy to hear they are sufficient. Although I can by no possibility have an interest in them, nevertheless I myself too well know the blessings of competence not to congratulate you. True it is I know but little of the ways of money; but am blessed in my solicitors, Messrs. Grip and Nip, No. —, Furnival's-inn.

You speak of your incumbrances; my husband dying, left me without a single one. That your daughter should have forgotten her duty, is an affliction. I am glad, however, to find that you know the true source of consolation, and refuse to lend yourself to her improvidence. Truly, indeed, do you say it is a meddling world. I have found it so; as some of my lamented husband's poor relations will answer for me. However, as I could not endure the sight of anything that reminded me of my dear lost treasure, I have left them for ever in Cornwall. It is now some months since they have ceased to distress me.

Your son may mend. If you will allow me as a stranger to

speak, I think you should still act with tenderness towards him. How very little would pay his passage to Australia!

Health is, indeed, a treasure. *I* know it. Had I not had the robustness—pardon the word!—of a mountain nymph, I had never survived the dreadful shock that cruel death has inflicted on me. As it was, it struck me down. But, as the poet says, “the bulrush rises when the oak goes crash.”

You are partial to hunting? It is a noble recreation. My departed lamb followed the hounds, and, as sportsmen say, would ride at anything. He once broke his collar-bone; but, with good nursing, we put him in the saddle again in a month. Ha! you should have seen him in his scarlet coat!

In this fleeting life, how small and vain are personal gifts compared to the treasures of the mind! Still, if there is anything I admire, it is fine teeth. A wig, at least in a man, is detestable.

You say you are two-and-fifty. Well, I must say, you don't look *that* age.

You speak plainly of vices and say you have none. It would be ill manners in me, on so short—I may say, so very trivial—an acquaintance, to doubt you. Besides, it has been my faith—and what I have lost by it, I hav'n't time to tell—to think well of everybody. Weaknesses we all have. One of mine is, a love of a pew. We think but very little of religion, when we forget proper hassocks.

I have, however, delayed you too long; and indeed, except for politeness' sake, know not why I should have written at all.

I therefore remain,

Your obedient Servant,

RUTH DOUBLEKNOT.

P.S. I shall be out all day to-morrow. At present—I say at present—I know of no engagement for the next day; no, not next day—the day after; for *I* hate a Thursday.

LETTER XXV.

FROM A CLERGYMAN TO A CHURCHWARDEN, ECCENTRIC IN
HIS ACCOUNTS.

DEAR SIR,—It is now two years since the horrors of fiscal war broke out in our once peaceful parish of Wholehog-cum-Applesauce. For two years, sir, have the affrighted parishioners had their souls and pockets torn by thoughts of mammon—for two years have they nightly fallen to sleep to groan and writhe beneath a nightmare sitting on their breasts in the horrid shape of a Churchwarden, grinning and hugging in his arms an iron-clasped account-book! Neither sex nor age have escaped the evil influence of the time: old women wax older when they talk of Churchwarden Grippe; and the faces of little children become sharp and thin as sixpences when they stammer out his name. True it is, the parishioners have put you in the cage of Chancery; nevertheless, with a magnanimous philosophy, you do nothing but make mouths at them through the bars!

Dear sir, pause—consider. Have you not done enough for history? Is it possible, think you, that the fame—such as it is—of Churchwarden Grippe can die whilst the parish of Wholehog-cum-Applesauce shall endure? Will not its annals preserve until the latest day a thousand memoranda of the peculiar reputation of Grippe? Whilst arithmetic shall remain to man, can they ever be forgotten? Why, then, be thus gluttonous of glory? Why crave for more renown, when some folks vow it is impossible for you to stand upright with the load already on your shoulders?

Dear Churchwarden, consider the danger of your present condition. For years and years have you borne the bag of Wholehog-cum-Applesauce. You have been the depository of the hopes of the parish; and if—as with a golden tongue you have declared it—the people owe you moneys, blush not, but take the balance. Let your mystic books be opened; call in Pundits for the work, and let the Cabala of Wholehog-cum-Applesauce be revealed to the vulgar. Then, how joyfully will your debtors pay their dues to the Churchwarden; while, on the other hand, if you should have slumbered in error—for even Churchwardens are men—with what serene delight will you pen a cheque upon the fortunate banker who holds in trust the hoard of Grippe!

Dear sir, you have been abused—sorely abused. You say it—

all the world know it. Unhappily, it is the infirmity of men to throw anything but crowns of flowers upon him they deem their debtor; and true it is, you do not walk in the odour of roses. It was one of the thousand fallacies by which the Romans hectored it over the world, that "money has no smell." Never believe it, dear Grippe. There is some money that will turn the sweetest Christian into a human pole-cat.

Consider what a plight are we all brought into by these pestilent accounts. Enter the Church of Wholehog-cum-Applesauce—survey its wants—take some leisure solemn half-hour, and pace up and down its aisles! Tears will trickle down your nose, and your noble heart will lie melting in your breast like green fat in the platter of an alderman. You will weep, sir—I am sure of it—you will weep, and your trembling and repentant hand will, with awakened instinct, unbutton for once your breeches' pocket.

Give ear to the sorrows of the people of the church. Myself, sir, its unworthy minister, would be very happy to hand you a receipt for arrears of salary. You are my debtor; but I pass my own claim, and implore for others.

Our organist, sir—our tuneful musician—lacks payment of some five quarters. Every touch of his subtle fingers has been for fifteen months a touch upon credit. Can you think of this, sir, and surrender up your Sabbath heart to the solemnity of pealing fugues? Alas, sir! with these teasing accounts upon your mind, does not some evil genius strike all religious harmony from out the music—does it not to your ear profanely change the hundredth psalm into the worldly discord of *The Miser thus a Shilling sees*? And then our church bells that should call like comforting angels to your Sabbath soul—alas, sir, and alas!—what do you hear in them? Nothing, but three horrid, clanging notes—£ s. d., £ s. d., £ s. d.?

Our sexton, sir—poor, patient creature!—for a year and a half he has not known the sweets of income. Consider it, dear sir, consider it; a day must come, when you will need his service. Therefore, that you may meet that day with Christian peace, ponder on the troubles of Wholehog-cum-Applesauce—allay the tumults—pay arrears—cure all heart-burnings—make straight your accounts, and believe me,

Your earnest well-wisher,

GILEAD BALM.

LETTER XXVI.

THE CHURCHWARDEN'S ANSWER.

SIR,—As I consider your letter a very great impertinence, you will take any answer to it as, upon my part, a remarkable condescension. I had made up my mind to go out of the world without ever deigning to write or speak again of the accounts of Wholehog-cum-Applesauce. I feel that they ought to be beneath my notice: but so it is—throughout the whole of this fiscal war, as you are pleased to call the present atheistic revolution of the parish—I have been overflowing with a courtesy, a gentleness, that has only increased the audacity of my slanderers. I have been meek and unresisting, and so I have been trampled upon. But, sir, a worm will turn, and, by consequence, so will the Churchwarden of Wholehog-cum-Applesauce!

The parishioners *have* certainly put me into Chancery. What of it? The people at the Zoological Gardens have put a brown bear into a pit; and the fine fellow still climbs to the top of his pole, and squatting there, looks with surly contempt upon the poor creatures who, whatever they may say of him, dare not come to close quarters. Take your answer out of that, sir.

I have law upon my side—law, sir, which I should hope is stronger than any arithmetic you may please to talk of. I am Churchwarden of Wholehog-cum-Applesauce for life: for there is a divine right of churchwardens as well as of kings. As a scholar and a man of some sense, you ought to know that I was born for the office. At all events, come what may, I intend to die in it.

You ask me to throw open my books to the vulgar eyes of the whole world! What next! No, sir, it is enough for me to know that the parish is in my debt; and if I do not arrest every man, woman, and child in it for the arrears, I only show a considerateness and a humanity for which myself to myself has always been distinguished.

I know nothing about the Romans, and want to know nothing. They were, I believe, a set of heathens, who never knew the blessings of a Churchwarden. I believe, however, with you, that money has a smell, and a sweet smell too, or how, as a man of wealth, should I still be hugged and caressed by so many friends in the City?

You invite me to take a turn in your church. No, sir; until

the brawls which now disturb it shall have ceased, I will never enter it. I shall perform my devotions in a place where parish-ioners are obedient, and churchwardens are respected.

As for your claim, sir, I wonder at the hardihood with which you make it, when you consider the heavy balance there is between the parish and myself. Decency should have taught you better.

As for the organist, I very much doubt whether a parish that is in debt should encourage such a luxury. I know that I should never think of spending my money on music whilst I owed money to a living soul.

Your sexton, too, has claims for wages. Poor man! I am sorry—very sorry for him; but as I have made up my mind to have a public funeral in either Westminster Abbey or Saint Paul's, I shall of course be under no obligations to the sexton of Wholehog-cum-Applesauce.

And now, sir, to conclude: You have, among you, placed me in Chancery. There I shall remain, and take the cast of the dice. What! do you think I would call in accountants and so end the matter? I should think not. You know not how sweet to me is the hubbub I have made. When folks can't afford real turtle, they make themselves as comfortable as possible with mock: for callipee and callipash they content themselves with plain calf's-head. In like way with other men, if they are not able to make a high reputation, they will at least, by hook or by crook, lay hold of notoriety. Now, reputation to notoriety is what real turtle is to mock. If I am contented with the humbler dish—with the mere calf's-head—I best show my humility, and at the same time remain,

Your obedient humble servant,

EBENEZER GRIPPS.

LETTER XXVII.

FROM A LADY IN WANT OF A GOVERNESS, TO AN ACQUAINTANCE.

DEAR MADAM,—We are again in tribulation; for Miss Sinclair, the young person whose harp-playing you were pleased to admire, has left us—left us, too, in the most shameful and ungrateful manner, before we could provide another teacher for the dear children. Oh, these governesses! I am told there is some clever gentleman who has invented an arithmetical machine that will calculate any sum to a fraction. What a blessing would that man bestow upon really good society who should

invent an instrument for teaching ! I am sure, in these days, the thing might be done, and would pay admirably ; for how much annoyance would be spared us—how much impertinence that we are daily exposed to from a class of individuals who can have no standing in society, and are nevertheless continually at one's elbow ! The cook, the housemaid, the lady's-maid, all know their place, and behave themselves accordingly : but there is no teaching a governess that she is nothing more than a servant ; a person hired for wages to polish the minds of your children, just in the same manner as Molly polishes your rosewood and mahogany—and to be as careful of their morals as if, like the housekeeper, she was entrusted with so much precious china. Your maid dresses your hair with due humility, and takes your little bits of ill-temper with proper resignation ; she knows these things are considered in her wages, and thus she may be an ornament to the sphere to which it has pleased Heaven to call her. But governesses ! they are continually flying in the face of Providence. There is, too, an impertinence in their very meekness ; at times, an insult in their silence. They move about you with the air of injured beings—an air that says to your very face—"We, too, are ladies, though you can't believe it." Ladies ! as if the person who takes a salary is not, to all intents and purposes, a servant—at best, a better sort of menial servant.

To return to that person Sinclair. I never liked her from the first ; but as I heard that she had an old father to provide for—the man was, I believe, in gaol at the time—I suffered my charity to cover a multitude of her faults, and received her, as she was afterwards pleased to call it, into my family,—into one of my back bed-rooms would have been a more respectful phrase. Well, she would always be reading, when she ought to have talked to and amused the dear children. It was only yesterday that she repeated the fault. She had been out three or four hours walking, and I found her again reading a book, whilst the dear things were moped to death for something to enliven them. My indignation was roused, and I asked her if she thought she was acting honestly by her employer ? She looked up at me—her face turned blood-red—her lips quivered with some impertinent reply, I am certain, by their motion—and then dropping the book, she burst into tears. Governesses, my dear Madam, *always can*. But I have not told you all. What book, think you, was it ? *A Christmas Carol*. I have never read the thing ; but knowing it to be aimed at the best interests of good society, all the feelings of a mother rushed upon me, and I believe I *did* read her a pretty lesson. You hav'n't heard all. Whilst I was

reproaching her for her ingratitude, her baseness in bringing such books into my family, and saying something, I forget exactly what, about a viper I had warmed—she sprang from the chair like a play-house queen, and in a voice as searching as an east wind—told me that she would leave my house that instant ! Her impudence—for I knew she must go to starvation—fairly took away my breath. Well, it isn't all told. She multiplied her insults, for with her wet, streaming face, she caught little Emmeline about the neck, and kissing her violently, cried "God bless the children !" I trust I am not unforgiving ; no : but there was an emphasis upon "the children" that nothing would ever make me pardon. It was a refinement of abuse that made me quiver again. However, I had my satisfaction of my lady ; for I would not suffer a servant to stir—no, I made her call a hackney-coach herself to take her boxes ; though after the sort of book I caught her with, I certainly ought to have well rummaged them before they left the house.

Can you recommend me another governess—for although I have been but a day unprovided, I feel worn to death by the children ? What's worse—but then she's only a child—Emmeline has been crying all day about the creature, and moreover says she loves her. The principles she might have instilled into the dear babe's mind, I shudder to think of ! However, we are happily rid of her. If you can recommend me a really useful, well-behaved person—you know the kind of individual I want—you will confer a favour on

Your's obliged,

HONORIA ASPHALT.

P.S.—I havn't told you all my troubles. We are about to lose our treasure of a cook. Sir John and he have had some words about the soup—the man feels his reputation wounded, and has resigned. I have myself tried to pacify him, but as yet without success. I have scolded Sir John well for his indiscretion towards so valuable a *chef*. I am, however, going out, and shall see if a nice diamond ring will restore peace ; if so, fifty or seventy pounds will be well bestowed.

LETTER XXVIII.

THE ANSWER.

DEAR MADAM,—Whilst I sympathise with you, I must also use the privilege of a friend, and admonish. The truth is—and, though truth, like medicine, is generally unpleasant, it must nevertheless, like medicine, be sometimes administered—the truth is, you spoil all your governesses. You do, indeed. I, who have had a large experience of that sort of people, know it. Only a week ago, I saw Sinclair in the Park, talking with another governess. As your friend, I took the liberty of asking her who she was? She replied—I thought very boldly—an old schoolfellow. Upon which I told her you would be very angry if you knew of the indiscretion. That, as a governess, she had no longer anything to do with schoolfellows, and should speak to nobody but to the young ladies. That it was her duty, as a young woman of principle—and I dwelt, as you know I can dwell, upon the word—upon principle, to cut herself off from the rest of the world, and study nobody but you and the dear children. My idea of a good governess, I observed, is, that she should be a sort of nun engaged upon wages; a person vowed to humility, gentleness, and resignation, for so much salary. That she should mix in the world as though she were no part of it—self-removed from its pleasures and its sympathies; in fact, as a sort of machine ordained by Providence to await the behests of those ordained above her. Upon this, she dropt her eyelids, I thought, very insolently, and, with a smile not to be mistaken, turned away. Never, my dear madam, let your governess talk with another governess. Depend upon it, their conversation is always about their employers; and such is the ungrateful spirit of the people, I fear me always to their detriment. Besides, I have known the scarlet fever brought into a house by such a practice.

You will also pardon me, when I tell you that you are not sufficiently discreet as to the age of your governesses. Morris, I remember, who preceded Sinclair, must at least have been seven-and-thirty; whilst Sinclair cannot have been more than one-and-twenty. Now, a governess should never be chosen younger than five-and-twenty, or older than five-and-thirty. The intermediate time may be called the prime of governess-life. If you get them younger, their heads are full of most

preposterous notions about affections, and sympathies, and what they call yearnings for home. Like unweaned lambs, they are always bleating and unsatisfied. At five-and-twenty, the governess-mind knows better what is due to itself and employer, and with a strong hand plucks up such weaknesses as unprofitable weeds; at least, if it doesn't, it ought. After five-and-thirty, the governess gets slow and prosy, and her heaviness may dangerously infect the light-heartedness of the dear children—therefore, she is not to be thought of an hour longer. Immediately supply her place with a junior teacher, as you value the morals and accomplishments of your beloved family.

If, in the course of ten years, with a salary of, let us say, twenty pounds a-year, out of which she has only to buy clothes fit to keep company with the children, the governess has not saved a sufficiency for her declining age—it is but too painful to know that she must have been a very profuse, improvident person. And yet, I fear me, there are lamentable instances of such indiscretion. I myself, at this moment, know a spendthrift creature who, as I have heard, in her prime—that is, for the ten years—lived in one family. Two of her pupils are now countesses. Well, she had saved next to nothing, and when discharged, she sank lower and lower as a daily governess, and at length absolutely taught French, Italian, and the harp, to the daughters of small tradesmen, at eighteen-pence a lesson. In time, she of course got too old for this. She now lives somewhere at Camberwell, and, though sand-blind, keeps a sixpenny school for little boys and girls of the lower orders. With this, and the profits on her cakes, she contrives to eke out a miserable existence—a sad example, if they would only be warned, to improvident governesses.

I am now called away, and am therefore unable to answer your letter to the full. However, you shall have another epistle on the subject to-morrow.

Your's always,

DOROTHEA FLINT.

LETTER XXIX.

FROM THE HON. MRS. FLINT TO LADY HONORIA ASPHALT,
ON THE CHOICE OF A GOVERNESS.

DEAR MADAM,—I resume my pen to finish my subject ; and as I have had considerably more experience than yourself in the article of governesses, I will briefly tell you how I have always dealt with these people. You will then be able to contrast my practice with your own. Like myself when a very young mother, you have been too considerate—too yielding. Firmness, dear madam, firmness is the first essential—young governesses are as difficult to break as young horses ; but it is to be done.

I told you that I always had my suspicions of Sinclair's German—I am sure it was not the true Saxon. Now I have never engaged a governess unless she had acquired French, German, and Italian, in their separate countries. Nothing like studying a language on its proper soil, otherwise the accent of the children becomes irretrievably ruined. It was only last week that my dear friend, Lady Dinah Grosbeak, called me in to examine a candidate for the place of daily governess. The creature had certainly learned French in Paris, but she knew no more of Florence or Dresden than the city giants. She played the piano remarkably well, and brought excellent testimonials to her knowledge of thorough-bass. She sang, too, very nicely—and if the water-colour paintings she produced were really her own—they were—for I always like to do justice to everybody—very pretty. However, with all her accomplishments, humility was not among them, for what do you think she asked of Lady Dinah to attend only her three children as daily governess ? Positively, thirty pounds a year, and by way of climax—her dinner !

However, to proceed with my own experience. Knowing the artifice of governesses—feeling assured that it is necessary to be quite alive to their whims and caprices, I always made it a principle to deduct their salary for any week or even day of illness. Bless you, madam, without this precaution, there is no knowing what one might lose in sham fevers and surreptitious headaches. Let your governess be aware of your inflexibility on this point, and be assured she is never ill ; or if she is, it is all the same, you never hear of it. Again : I never allowed a bell in the bed-room of a governess—otherwise, the poor servants

would, I knew, be continually rung up and down. No ; if the governess wanted anything, she could certainly somehow get it, without raising the house for it. On one occasion, too, when we left town—leaving some of the children at home—I gave to the governess a proper dietary ; a certain scale of food which it was my order was not to be departed from. As I had to pay for the meat, bread, butter, milk, &c., to be consumed, I was of course the only fitting judge of the quantity—that is, for a governess.

There are, however, occasions when appearances may justify a little extra outlay on a governess. For instance, when my dear father died—ah, madam ! if ever there was a true Christian, he was one—I made my person a present of a dress and bonnet. In fact, I had three dresses, for my maid, the nurse, and governess, all alike. A little liberality of this sort towards our fellow-creatures is, after all, not lost in this world, and can do us no harm in the next.

Whenever it was necessary that my governess should join any of my little social parties, I, of course, never introduced her. No—it was perfectly well understood who she was, and she was never drawn out of her place—never for a moment confounded with any of the ladies present. It is convenient, too, now and then, to have these persons with you : they relieve a dull moment or so in an evening, when desired to take the stool and play. And even here, one must be very guarded, lest the governess forgets herself. I remember, on one occasion, a governess I had—a pale, puling thing, with large blue eyes and flaxen hair, and, by the way, a cough that entirely made her singing a bad bargain—I remember that, whilst she played, she once suffered my nephew Adolphus to turn the music ! But when we retired, didn't I school her ! She had red eyes for a fortnight.

I had written thus far, when I received a letter that accompanies this. It is from a young woman who has never yet been from home. She has been splendidly brought up, but her father would speculate in hops or some such things, and they are all beggars. Having a sort of feeling for the family, and hearing that the girl must go into the world, I wrote to her—with a view to your service—asking her notions of the duties and responsibilities of a governess—the treatment she expected, &c. &c. You will read her reply. It is exquisite. Quite a leaf from an old French romance. Poor thing ! with such ideas, what will become of her ? I will, however, look somewhere else for you ; in the mean time,

Believe me, yours always,

DOROTHEA FLINT.

LETTER XXX.

FROM A YOUNG LADY DESIROUS OF AN ENGAGEMENT AS
FAMILY GOVERNESS.

MADAM,—It is, indeed, true that the sudden and total wreck of my father's fortune renders it necessary for me to earn my own bread; and, unhappily, not mine alone. Your letter, kind madam, came like a sunbeam upon our darkened dwelling. Now, indeed, do I feel grateful—past expression—for the few attainments I possess, for they will enable me to bear with cheerfulness the change prepared for me. They will raise me above the indifference and contempt of the world; and whilst they supply me with the means of honourable existence—and what, indeed, so honourable, so truly lofty, as a life dedicated to the mind of childhood?—they may haply not be deemed wholly useless to others. I am now tranquil—decided. When the truth first came upon me that I must henceforth exist by my own exertions, I own it, old vanities—the follies born of fortune—clung for a moment closer to me. But I have laid apart false pride like a masquerade garment. I am instantly prepared to begin my working life.

You ask my notion of the duties, the cares, the responsibilities of a governess. Alas, madam! it is a contemplation of their seriousness, nay, of their solemnity, that makes me pause—falter, in my hopes. I cannot but fear my own unworthiness for the task—it is so vital. For is not the mind of childhood the tenderest, holiest thing, this side heaven! Is it not to be approached with gentleness, with love,—yes, with a heart-worship of the great God from whom, in almost angel-innocence, it has proceeded? A creature undefiled by the taint of the world—unwearyed by its injustices—unwearied by its hollow pleasures? A being fresh from the source of light, with something of its innocent lustre in it? If childhood be this—how holy the duty to see that, in its onward growth, it shall be no other! To stand, as a watcher at the temple, lest any unclean thing shall enter it. This, surely, is one of the loftiest duties that can elevate infirm humanity; and this duty is especially required of him or her who tends upon the growing mind of youth: it is a task that, however misunderstood by the many, ennobles the doer. I know that all the world thinks not thus. I know, alas! that there are mothers who place their mere jewellery under

bankers' locks, who, nevertheless, trust the jewelled minds of their children to the keeping of a stranger, with scarcely a thought of the fidelity of the keeper.

You have, now, madam, my idea of the duties of a governess—of her hard, her earnest, yet rewardful labours. As to her treatment, she is—if conscientious in her vocation—a gentlewoman. She has within her trust the greatest treasures that human life—with all its pride—can know: the hearts, and, indeed, the future souls of children. As her mission is a noble one, respect and courtesy are hers by right. To look upon her as a better-dressed drudge is, in very truth, not poorest insolence alone, but darkest error. Her patient, quiet labours, are to insure the best triumphs of life; for they make, or should make, good daughters, good wives, good mothers. In these the truthfulness and happiness of the world have, surely, some stake, and are, indeed, her lasting debtors.

I have heard many stories of the contumely, the hard-dealing of the world towards the governess. It was not so in *my* home—and, if only for the sake of woman, I must hope such tales are over-charged. For if, indeed, the poor governess be this frequent sufferer, to whom does she owe the misery, but to sister-woman? Of whom has she to complain of coldness of looks, harshness of words, of all the petty, reckless injuries that sting her daily life,—of all the scorn of pride, and arrogance of apathetic wealth? Why, to woman; to her richer sister; to one of her own sex—made hard, exacting, by undeserved good fortune. This is a scandal, madam, that women should rise against and defy; or if not, they must, in truth, remain unconscionable debtors to the poets.

With many thanks, madam, for the interest you have taken in our broken fortunes,

I remain, yours gratefully,

MARY WILTON.

LETTER XXXI.

FROM A BISHOP TO A YOUNG FRIEND ABOUT TO TAKE ORDERS.

DEAR BASIL,—I have learned, with exceeding gladness, of your excellent father, that it is your determination to enter the Church. From what I know of your nature, I feel assured that this resolve is not the impulse of a vagrant, unthinking disposition, but the goodly fruit of a mind disciplined, and

chastened of those vanities which, at your age, too commonly beset mankind. Believing that your election is that of an ardent and purified spirit, I hail it rejoicingly.

My dear young friend, be grateful—yea, in your inmost soul, be grateful—that you have been directed to a choice which, whilst it will abound with life-long satisfaction to yourself, will make you a daily providential comfort to your fellow-creatures. There is a happiness in this belief, too deep, too awful for any words of mine—a happiness only to be felt in the heart it unconsciously,

From the moment of your ordination, you are set apart from the gross, vain, foolish desires of men; you are made a teacher and a watcher of your kind—the counsel, the reproof of the pastor, directed and softened by the love and sympathy of a brother. There is no despair so wild that the music of your comforting may not tame to gentleness and hope; there is no heart so stony that, smitten by your word, may not be made to gush with a living stream. High privilege—glorious prerogative, that makes man the mediator with Heaven—that gives him strength to raise from the dust the faint, crushed, guilt-dashed heart, assuring it a home and resting-place among the stars!

From how many blighting evils, cancerous cares, will your high office preserve you! You will see men pursuing vain wealth and vain honours, even as little boys hunt butterflies: with frantic glee they seize the thing pursued, and it is worthless in their grasp. Whilst you, rich in the spirit that is within you, unpained by the dignity of the awful future, will smile, though not in pride, but with abounding pity, with compassionating love. To you poverty itself will be a robe of highest state: and though most frugal be your board, yet, as with the patriarch, angels may feast with you, though men know them not.

In every stage of mortal life, you are the elected comforter, advisor of mankind. Your glorious and beautiful mission begins with the babe that shrinks and wails beneath the baptismal water, nor ends but with the blessing prayer that leaves the image of man to become again dust. From the font to the grave how many the calls—how many the necessities of your infirm and erring brother—for that hope, that consolation, of which you are the chosen phial! How beautiful your daily intercourse with those who feed and thrive upon your sayings! How sweet that gentle familiarity that mixes itself in the working-day life of the poor; that with soft greetings and kindly smiles claims kindred with the meanest of the earth as fellow-sojourners in future heaven!—And now, hark! it is

black midnight, and the tempest howls and claws like a famished wolf at your door. The thunder rolls, crashing above your roof! The lightning opens up the sky in one wide vault of fire—and now it is dark, and the wind moans like a despairing soul. There is a loud and urgent knocking at your door—again—again! Alas, dear sir, there is a poor creature, a cotter, one of your flock, in his last agony. His soul must from his flesh this awful night, and he begs your comforting, your benediction on its solemn journey.

You spring from your bed. Your cloak is old—thin almost as a web; nathless, you hug it closely around you, and with stout heart and composed soul follow your guide through path and no path—bog and mire. The thunder splits above you—the lightning chases your steps: but like a good spirit sent on God's own errand, you pass scathless on. You enter the hut of the dying; you comfort and strengthen the quivering soul. It departs to the Great Source it came from. And then in peace and prayer you retrace your steps, and sleep the sleep of the good.

But your own heart, my dear young friend, will best find out your duties. You will feel that every moment of your life must be a living example to all men. You must feel that your daily actions are as a mirror by which your flock are to dress their souls: that your every gesture should be gentle—your every word soft and sweet even as a note of well-touched music. Your life must be the active comment on the text you are sworn to, or your life is naught.

What! is there a man vowed to that text, who, worse than a hireling player, acts his part yet never feels it? Does he dress himself for some brief hour or so, to ape a mission? Is his daily life coarse chaffering? Is he a swiller at taverns? Does he, with embossed face, tell Cyprian tales, laughing the loudest at his noisome jest? Can there be such a man, and can he on the seventh day, with unabashed forehead, tempt God's thunder? No—it is impossible. He who says there is, gently rebuke. Say, "some enemy hath done this."

My dear Basil, I have endeavoured to place before you your duties as the parish pastor of a flock. Providence may, however, raise you to the bench. Yes, Basil; you may become a bishop. Nevertheless, seek not the dignity; nay, pray that it may never fall upon you. In your mid-day walks—in your closet—in your bed, let your constant ejaculation be—*Nolo episcopari*. Sweet, most sweet, is the humblest curacy—dangerous and difficult the richest see. How far happier—how more truly primitive the pastor of a Welsh mountain, than the bishop of even golden Durham! And the bishop—be assured of it—thinks so.

Nevertheless, I will suppose it your hard destiny to become a bishop. Power and wealth are poured upon you. Gold trickles in upon your treasury from a hundred curious crevices—from chinks, that in sooth might sometimes astonish the fathers. You cannot bless even so much churchyard clay, but that the clay, like a Potosi mine, shall render you so much gold. You would be bewildered by your wealth—you would weep in anguish or spirit at your riches, but that you always have with you the ignorant to teach—the poor to succour. Hence, you may with sweetest conscience clutch all the money you can ; for why ? As a bishop, are you not the almoner of Providence ? Do not the hungry cluster at your gate ? Send you not away the naked clothed and rejoicing ? Oh what a weight—a weight dragging the soul to earth would this mammon be, but that it stays not in the bishop's purse—but that, as the soft-hearted housewife feeds the winter birds, he scatters abroad his substance to the wretched and the suffering. Hence, being bishop, you may take all you can. Of course, you hold it but in trust. Every quarter your conscience audits the accounts with Heaven, — and you are serene, are happy in the humble sense of your own righteousness.

Being bishop, you are also law-maker. Beautiful, soul-exalting mission ! You sit in the House of Lords as a Superior Intelligence ; superior by the charity for all men that resides within you ! Hence, you defile not yourself with politics. The lawn of the bishop is never, like the coat of Joseph, parti-coloured. The bishop knows no one side of the human heart. No ; he is for humanity in all its breadth, and in all its depth. Hence, when lords talk of war, and tiger-looks steal into the eyes of men, the awful bishop rises from his seat, and with a voice of thunder denounces the abomination. And then with tearful eyes, and with a voice broken with the heart's spasms, he shows the blasphemy of murderous war—paints in their own diabolic hues thousands and thousands of drilled and hiring Cains butchering their brothers ! And thus the bishop sometimes—only sometimes—melts the House of Lords !

And now, my dear young friend, I have—though most imperfectly—laid before you the many blessings which await you in the Church, which, rightly ministered, is the vestibule to an immortal life. That you may serve in it with glory to yourself, and with profit to all men, is the prayer of

Yours affectionately,
SAMUEL OF ———.

LETTER XXXII.

THE ANSWER.

MY DEAR SIR,—It is impossible that I can sufficiently thank you for your letter. I have been all along in a sad mistake. My family having, by marriage, a snug thing or two in the Church, I thought it a good investment of the little talent I may possess. I don't boast of much—but at a fox-hunt I was never yet out at the death, and at a steeple-chase never *craned* at anything. I therefore thought I might manage to rub on very well in canonicals; but, really, you have thrown so many difficulties in my way, that I certainly must give the clergy the go-by.

With thanks, however, for your very long letter,

I remain, yours truly,

BASIL JOLLY.

P.S.—They tell me I've the gift of the gab—I think I shall go to the bar.

LETTER XXXIII.

FROM A YOUNG MAN ENTERING BUSINESS TO A RETIRED TRADESMAN.

RESPECTED SIR,—When we last met, you were kind enough to say that the benefit of your long experience in business should be always at my service; and that as the friend of my poor late father, it would always be a pleasure to you to advise his son. At the same time you desired me to give you my notions of the duties of a tradesman to the world and to himself, that you might at the onset correct my errors, and strengthen my judgment. I therefore hasten to comply with your request.

Of course, sir, I consider the old schoolboy copy that "Honesty is the best policy" to be the golden rule of life, and that the shortest way from one point to another is always in a straight line. Hence, it will ever be my pride to let my practice illustrate this beautiful sentiment. I do not see why a shop may not be made a temple of truth—and cannot understand why a falsehood "in the way of business" is not, after all,

a falsehood in all its bearings. Lies are lies, and no outside, skin-deep gilding will give to the base metal the value of the precious ore. I have, I am sorry to say, known tradesmen with great wrathfulness nail a proffered pocket-piece to their counter, — and still from their own mouths continue to issue counterfeit truths—in fact, do nothing but speak pocket-pieces. Yes, sir; I have known them to do this, and never blush or stammer when their eye has fallen on the copper countenance of the false half-crown, gleaming reproachfully upon them. But then, to pass bad money is a statuteable offence—whilst to pass lies for truths, if adroitly uttered from behind the counter, is nothing more than to do a clever stroke of business. The one practice has led men to the gallows—the other has taken them to the Bank of England.

"All in the way of trade" is, I know, a phrase that covers great hypocrisy, great practical deceit, great injustice between man and man. It is a convenient phrase, that from long custom has become an allowed apology for the trickeries of dealers. But a highwayman, who takes a purse, might as well believe that the black crape which hides his face from the knowledge of the despoiled, does also hide from his own soul a knowledge of his iniquity. How often is the "way of trade" no other than so much black crape worn behind the counter! A man may be as completely robbed by means of a false protestation, as though the lie were a loaded pistol.

There is, I know, a tenderness in the law towards the trappings of trade, that seems to show a positive sympathy between law and roguery. Men, it would almost seem, by general understanding, allow the necessity of wrong as a proper alloy to keep society together. Pure unmixed gold is too good for coin that is to suffer the wear and tear of passing from hand to hand; and so, that it may endure the longer, it is mingled with a little wholesome copper. In the like way, law seems to think pure honesty as altogether too refined for the hard working-day purposes of trade, and therefore looks indulgently upon its little shifts—its winning "ways." Let me further explain myself.

My opposite neighbour is a chandler and green-grocer: he makes his gains out of the veriest poor. Rags and keenest hunger are his miserable customers. You would think, sir, that when a tradesman held the scales for such buyers, justice would be to him a high religion. Well, sir, it was only yesterday that this very man was found to use false weights. It was his third offence; and he was fined by the compassionating law—ten pounds!

This same man has at the present moment a boy in gaol, doomed for six months, for stealing from his shop, when very hungry, one red herring. Thus, the tradesman may rob by means of scales and measures, merely paying for a sort of license to cheat, when detected : the very gains of his iniquity, too, go to lessen the fine ; he can, in fact, with tolerable luck, afford to rob. Now, does not law that makes such robbery only fineable, look most tenderly upon the evil-doing ? Does it not give a marked preference to the thief behind the counter above the picker and stealer before it ? Hence—use light weights, and pay money for the theft ; filch with your five fingers, and do hard-labour in gaol. Besides, the tradesman is sweetened—purified by the fine ; the stain upon his reputation is blotted up by bank-paper : now the vulgar thief always bears about him the foul odour of a prison. The keen nostrils of the police continually smell in him his first iniquity.

Now, sir, it will be my endeavour, as a tradesman, to acknowledge no “ways of trade”—to consider truth as truth in the smallest as in the greatest affairs of life. With this belief, I shall take my daily stand behind the counter, and cheerfully leave to Providence the rest. Tell me, dear sir, if I am not right,

And believe me, yours sincerely,

JOHN BALANCE.

LETTER XXXIV.

ANSWER TO THE ABOVE.

MR. JOHN BALANCE,—I have known you from a boy—yes, from a very babe—and I did not think you capable of insulting the friend of your excellent father. Worthy soul ! it is a good thing that he is out of the world : he is, it is my belief, saved that worst of all sorrows—a headlong, disobedient child. Your letter is enough to make him shiver in his coffin.

I can well understand your insinuation about the false weights. It is base and cruel. To me, with honourable grey hairs upon my head ! To me, almost old enough to be your grandfather ! It is true, that, in my time, I was fined, I think three times ; but then, I always proved that the false weights had been substituted by a malicious servant. The fines were certainly never returned to me ; but there was not one well-disposed person of the Sunday congregation—and twice a-day, Mr. John

Balance, did I appear in my pew, reserving my evening of rest to look over my books—not one of them who did not believe in my innocence. But then, I always studied respectability.

Your notions of business are the notions of a noodle. Truth is very beautiful no doubt, but if stark-naked truth was always to stand behind a counter, I should like to know who'd go into the shop. I know the value of truth as well as any man. And throughout my long and useful life I always used it as the dear late partner of my joys used her silver teapot—upon holiday occasions. I had too much respect for the real value of truth to be always bringing it out upon working-days.

You have no knowledge of the real talent required by a tradesman, and therefore I should advise you to go to sea, or list for a soldier. There is nothing so worthy of the attention of man—of his immortal spirit, as the Reverend Mr. Doublechin used to call it—as business. It employs all the strength of the soul—for the end and aim of all business is for man to look upon the rest of the world as only so many people to make so much money of. He is to consider them—that is, in a business way—as made especially for his own profit as a tradesman. And so, if he has only common sense, he is to use it as he best can for his own advantage. As for what you stupidly call lies, I always looked upon them as necessary tools for business—things without which it would be impossible to keep open shop. Lies are a sort of wooden pegs that keep the world together as if it was a box; nice little things, so let into the work as never to be seen. Take out the pegs, and how would the box tumble to pieces!

When you are really come to years of discretion, you will know that the private man and the tradesman are not at all one. Certainly not. I, Isaac Smirk, behind the counter, was not the Isaac Smirk dressed for church on Sundays. How could I be? How was I to bring up a large family—as yet you don't know the expense of clothing and schooling six children—in respectability, if I'd played the antics you talk of? No; trade is one thing, and what we call morals are another. Six days for business, and the seventh for religious duties. That, Mr. John Balance, has always been my motto; and following it, I never yet had a bill protested, but became in time what I now am—a respectable, happy man, who can lay his hand upon his heart and say he has thirty thousand pounds: a man who has married his daughters to fortunes, and, moreover, subscribes to—it isn't for me to say how many charities.

Looking at your letter as the madness of a green boy, I have condescended to answer it at this length. I trust that years and

experience may make you see the error of your ways. That they may do so, is the hope of

Your still well-wisher,

ISAAC SMIRK.

LETTER XXXV.

FROM A MATRON TO A NEWLY-MARRIED YOUNG LADY ON THE
TREATMENT OF A HUSBAND.

MY DEAR CLARIBEL,—Your honeymoon being over, I feel it my duty—as, indeed, it will be my pleasure—to instruct you in the serious purposes of marriage. I have had my trials, my dear, in what is called the blessed state, and could if I chose write this letter in the tears of widowhood. Three times have I been bereft of the tenderest of husbands—for every one of the dear men was really so—and now am I left like the lonely dove to murmur alone. I have, however, this satisfaction, to know that I managed them all to my heart's content, whilst they—dear, simple lambs!—believed they managed me.

Men in their extreme ignorance call us the weaker sex. The weaker sex! When—and they know it—we can pull and play with their hearts'-strings as little children play with toy harlequins. However, never disabuse them of the fond conceit. Our weakness, as they are pleased to call it, is our best strength. Continue to make your husband think you the most delicate of creatures, and he will treasure you accordingly. We all of us seem pretty well to know and follow out this truth in days of courtship, but forget it almost as soon as the clerk has said Amen. This, my dear girl, is the great error of our sex: it is this that makes wife the slave and husband the master. Now it has ever been my plan to perpetuate the privilege that courtship gives us, throughout every day of wedlock. And very properly. What! is your lap-dog that obediently fetches and carries—is he suddenly to refuse to obey you, and only because you have put a collar round his neck, and hold him by the ring of a chain at your third finger? Therefore, my dear, let your nerves be always delicate: hence, your husband will treasure you like a precious piece of china. Be foolish enough to appear robust, and, on the contrary, you will have no more care bestowed upon you than a red clay pipkin.

There are, I know, brutes in the human form, not to be deceived; but your husband is, I trust, not of them. As a

girl, I remember a monster of the sort. My own dear mother—from whom, let me confess it, I learned many precious lessons—she made as much as any woman of her nerves. Well, one day, my father poking the fire, down came—as you know, sometimes, they will come, with such a clatter—the shovel and tongs. My mother screamed, declared my father wanted to get rid of her, and immediately retired to her chamber. Though a party was to dine with us, my mother—true to her principles—resolutely went to bed. My father was all self-reproach and sorrow. He related the unfortunate event to the monster I speak of, saying something about “the wear and tear of the female constitution.” Whereupon, I shall never forget it, the wretch replied—“Pooh—pooh! Female constitution! It never wears, it never tears: at the worst it only stretches.” And this—their conduct proves it—is the brutal faith of thousands. My dear father, however, was of the contrary belief; so well too did my dear mother manage, that after this fall of the shovel and tongs, he never after poked the fire as if the poker was really his own. And this is as it should be.

Hence, my dear girl, cultivate your nerves: you can't pet 'em too much. Something will always be happening in the house,—and unless your husband be worse than a stone,—every new fright will be as good as a new gown or a new trinket to you. There are some domestic wounds only to be healed by the jeweller.

I don't advise you not to love your husband, very much—but never show the abundance of it. How men impose upon what I call a superfluity of affection, it is dreadful to think of! No; there is a decent sort of tenderness—a sort of tepid love—that is the safest. It never permits a wife to commit herself; it never shows to the man that he is supreme in her affections, and so enables him to sport with them. However, do not let him think himself indifferent to you: certainly not; at least, let the poor man have the benefit of the doubt.

In the slightest case of sisterly frailty, be all indignation. It is the very easiest and cheapest way of airing your own excessive goodness. Now and then, too, you can—with great pain to yourself, of course—hazard suspicions of some of your acquaintance. Suspicion, skilfully used, is an excellent thing. Like a little dust of rouge, if very tenderly laid on, it throws out in fine relief the natural beauty of the wearer. Rouge is a darling little fib, that lies, as somebody says, like truth—and so, too, I take it, if properly applied, is a slight suspicion. They may both colour false modesty.

There is, too, a sort of side-wind way that will enable you at once to please and tease your husband. Jealousy—that is, a

happy affectation of the passion—is a wonderful weapon in a skilful hand. Therefore, when walking with the poor man declare that he looks at every woman he meets, and sulk accordingly. Sometimes, however, vary the accusation, and declare that every woman he meets looks at him. From this assumed fact, you can make any deductions, and endeavour in a torrent of words to declare how very, very miserable you ought to be. The man, of course, must think himself dear to you, or wherefore such fantastic jealousy? He must feel, though with a feeling of wretchedness, that you love him; or wherefore show the love with so much misery to him? Does not puss love the live yet wounded mouse she bites and scratches.

Again, as to temper, never let it be certain. Husbands—I know them—presume upon evenness of temper. No, let your husband feel that he is never safe. He will accordingly be gentle, watchful, in his manner. Hence, be at times in the most exuberant spirits; and then, with a thought—at some unconscious look of your husband, some playful word—have a mute tongue, and brows of threatening thunder. In your very gayest moments, let your helpmate feel as if he is called upon to admire some curious gun—very beautiful, but to be most carefully handled, lest it go off, and destroy him.

If your husband wishes for music, declare you have a sudden headache, and add this, he ought to have seen as much, and not have asked you. If, on the contrary, he has a book, or would doze by the fire, immediately play the "*Battle of Prague*," with all the cannon accompaniments.

If he wish you to go out with him, say he always asks you when he knows you can't go; and then, on the contrary, desire that he shall take you to the opera or play, when you are well aware that he has some previous engagement.

On this point, too, be particularly obdurate. When your husband goes out with a likelihood of returning home late, insist upon sitting up for him. He may urge, that he can take the key; that, in fact, it will annoy him to keep anybody from their bed. Meet all this with a cold, decisive assurance, that you *will* sit up for him. If he come home late, what a delicious triumph for you! There you are, my love—I always was—in your nightcap and wrapped in three shawls, making up yourself for the picture of a very much wronged woman. The culprit at length returns; you catch his eye, and lead it to dwell upon the reproachful candle guttering in the socket—that candle, which in very weariness of heart and for nothing else, you have every five minutes mangled with the snuffers, as though unconsciously to make the case all the stronger against your offending mate.

Sometimes, on such occasions, say nothing, but cold as a statue walk up-stairs. Sometimes, too, it will add considerably to the pain of the criminal, if you carefully draw a sigh, and "wish you were in your grave."

As for your husband's friends, give them always a chilling welcome. If now and then they insist upon staying, as you think, late,—declare that they have had wine enough, and they ought to know it.

My dear mother had an admirable way. Two or three times—for my father never tempted her oftener—she sat up guarding the fire-place. No coal did she suffer to approach it. The fire went out; it was piercing winter; and then in a triumph only known to such a wife, did she retire to her room, comforting herself that "They'd soon be starved out, and must go."

I have herein, my love, thrown down only a few hints; but I can add a great many more to them, if I find you worthy of my teaching.

In the mean time, I remain your affectionate friend,

TABITHA TALONS.

LETTER XXXVI.

THE YOUNG LADY'S ANSWER.

MADAM,—At present, I have no wish that my husband should leave me; when I have, I shall lose no time in availing myself of your instructions, feeling quite convinced that they could not but very soon lead to such a conclusion.

I remain, yours, &c.,

CLARIBEL SMITH.

LETTER XXXVII.

FROM A YOUNG GENTLEMAN, SOLICITING HIS FATHER TO
PAY HIS DEBTS.

MY DEAR FATHER,—How often have you told me that I should see my folly! Indeed, sir, you are a true prophet. I never thought it possible that I could look upon the world as now, in very truth, I find it—a deceitful, hollow, seductive place, in which there is nothing worthy of the mind of man, save those inestimable comforts which, had I but followed your wise and

excellent counsel, I should by this time have been in the enjoyment of. Ah, sir! there are many young men who, in their worst misfortunes—and can there be worse than debt?—are nevertheless spared the remorse which at this moment preys upon your wretched son. They—poor fellows!—may have been launched upon the sea of life—as you have often pertinently called this vale of tears—without rudder or compass; with nothing, sir, to direct or counsel them. It is no wonder when such men suffer shipwreck, or are stripped by pirates. But, sir, I vainly seek a single comforting excuse. I have had the best of men and kindest of fathers, who has bestowed upon me advice of greater value than pearls—more precious than gold. And yet how headstrong, wild, and vicious—yes, sir, I blush to write it—vicious I have been, reckless of those inestimable precepts which of themselves ought to have enriched me with a treasure more lasting than wealth. But, sir, at length I am convinced. Yes, sir, my eyes are opened, and I now behold the precipice on which I stand. Another step or two and I had been lost for ever. But there is yet time to draw back—yes, sir, aided by your parental hand—there is, I fondly hope, yet time for me to regain all that I have lost: except, indeed, the precious hours that, as you once beautifully expressed it, I have cast away like water in the sea.

I write, sir, as you will perceive, from a prison. Ha! my honoured father, it is—I humbly believe—impossible even for you to imagine the change that prison walls have worked in me. They have softened my heart—they have made me take an inside look into myself—they have shown me, written with a terrible hand, the long, long list of all my vices, all my follies: they have—but I cannot pursue the theme. The very recollection of the pain I have caused you almost makes me drop the pen abashed; nevertheless, I will struggle with my feelings, and, if only for penance, try to proceed.

With all my sufferings, I nevertheless try to feel grateful to my creditors who have placed me here. There are, I am sorry to write it, young men in this prison upon whom the moral of the place (as I call it) seems entirely lost. They give themselves up to the most reckless enjoyments; they drink—for, somehow, drink is smuggled—they game, they play at racket;—in fact, they sink from bad to worse, and when they return to the world, they will, I fear, visit it more like pests, than as reformed, rational creatures. Again and again have I been tempted by some of these brawlers to join in what they madly call their pleasures. But no, sir; I trust I am not wholly lost. Hitherto, I have lived as much as possible apart from all—I have read, sir, read

the *one* Book, which it was your best advice to me always to read. There are lost young men in this place who say a father—"governor" is their slang expression—is a person made by Providence only to pay his son's bills: I hope, sir, that I have a truer, a nobler notion of the uses of a parent. I fervently trust that in entreating of you for this, the third and last time, to pay my debts, you will believe me when I assure you that I do this with the greatest reverence for your parental character—with (whether you grant or refuse my prayer) abounding gratitude for all that you have accomplished for a hitherto unworthy son.

I assure you, dear sir, this time my penitence is profound. From my present feelings, I know I can withstand all future temptations. "Ha, ha!" cried one of the spendthrifts here, "you'll soon get tired of this moping, miserable life; you'll soon be a jolly, roaring, drinking dog like one of us." But no, sir! although this prison should be my grave, it shall at least be the tomb of a penitent.

With many burning blushes I enclose you a list of all my debts—really all; pay them, my dearest father, and be assured of the gratitude and obedience of

Your erring, but affectionate son,

CHARLES BUTTER.

P.S.—I have been urged to liberate myself as a bankrupt; but I trust, sir, I can still feel like your son—can still respect the honour of the family. I'll die first.

LETTER XXXVIII.

THE FATHER'S ANSWER.

SIR,—You have seen your folly so often that, it is evident, by this time you are quite accustomed to it. All your long letter may be boiled down like spinach, into three words, "Pay my debts." All the rest is mere flourish—mere palaver. No, sir; you may break my heart, but you shall not break my fortune. I'll not pay a single sixpence.

I am, your affectionate Father,

JOHN BUTTER.

P.S.—You may become a bankrupt as soon as you please. Thank heaven! the honour of the family is too secure to be injured by such an unprincipled spendthrift. Not a sixpence, sir—not a single sixpence.

LETTER XXXIX.

FROM THE YOUNG GENTLEMAN'S MOTHER.

MY BELOVED BOY,—I hav'n't slept a wink since you've been in that horrid place. I hadn't yet dared to speak to your father, but I saved your letter, which, in a dreadful rage, he threw upon the fire. Ha! my dear boy, that letter made me almost happy. With the abilities you have to write such a letter, what might you not do in this world! If you would only be your own friend, what could stand in your way?

But I please myself in the belief that your repentance is sincere. I am heartily glad that you have nothing to do with the riotous and sinful set about you: most glad to find that you neither drink, nor game, nor do anything but read that *one* Book. Continue to do so, my dear boy, and depend upon it your father sha'n't have a minute's rest in his own house until you are again among us. God bless you!

Your affectionate Mother,

MARTHA BUTTER.

P.S.—I send you 10*l*. I hope this time that your list of debts is quite correct: that you have put all down: for you know how you deceived your poor father twice before.

LETTER XL.

FROM A GENTLEMAN TO HIS FRIEND, SOLICITING HIS SERVICES
IN A DUEL.

MY DEAR BROWN,—Let me see you immediately. A matter upon which depends the good name, the honour, the all that makes this world tolerable, requires that I should instantly consult you. I will, however, in as few words as possible, inform you of my present position. When you know it, I feel assured that I shall have your immediate sympathy—your promptest assistance.

This evening, taking a quiet stroll by the Serpentine, accompanied by faithful Ponto, the dog suddenly jumped into the stream, and swimming into the middle, remained there, swimming

round and round—you know what a water-dog he is—barking and snapping at the gnats that danced about him. The superb fellow attracted much attention; some ladies—among them two very lovely girls—stopped in a carriage to watch and admire Ponto. They called him all kinds of pretty names, and one of the girls, I was inclined to think, looked as though she wished some of the praises to be shared by Ponto's master. I am not a vain man, Brown—I should despise myself if I were; but I nevertheless felt a very pleasurable emotion as the girl, with her large black eyes, lighted up at the doings of Ponto, did now and then glance approvingly at me. All this continued for some minutes, and very pleasant it was. At length a gentleman—I suppose I must call him so—came up to the carriage, and knowing the ladies, entered into conversation with them. The girl with the black eyes begged him to look at Ponto, who was still chasing the gnats; the gentleman, however, scarcely deigned to bestow a glance on the magnificent fellow, and what is more—leaning his arms upon the phaeton door—he absolutely, and in a most marked way, turned his back upon the dog, as I am now convinced, to pass a slight upon his master. You know I am not a passionate man, Brown; certainly not; nevertheless, I felt I had attained what you are continually preaching to me—some conquest over myself—when I suffered this incivility of a stranger to pass unrebuked, unnoticed. However, this was bad enough—but matters were not to end here.

At length, Ponto came ashore, landing where the gentleman stood with his back to the water. On coming to land, Ponto—with the natural movement of a dog—gave himself a vigorous shake, and the water flew from him as from a well-twirled mop. Of course, much of it went upon the gentleman, the ladies laughing at the dilemma. My gentleman, however, in a burst of passion, flung out his foot at Ponto, and wholly forgetful of the ladies' presence, cried, "D—n the dog!"

Now, Brown, you know I am not a hasty man—no, I think not; nevertheless, I can suffer no man, under any circumstances whatever, to damn my dog. Besides, in addition to the offensive word, there was a violence attempted upon the person of the animal. It is but little satisfaction to me that Ponto, by his never-failing agility, avoided the kick intended for him,—the gentleman, by the ill-directed violence of the action, being almost flung over,—that has nothing to do with it; I feel that I—I Hector Montgomery, was attempted to be kicked through Ponto; and that when the man damned the dog, he most certainly meant the damn to reach the master.

Under these circumstances, my dear Brown, nothing remains

for me but to call out the offender. The laws of honour demand it: my position in society requires it—for how,—how, I ask,—could I ever again appear in the world unless this stain was wiped out with blood?

I enclose you the party's card: but come, come, instantly, that no time may be lost. My honour festers with delay.

Yours, my dear Brown, ever truly,

HECTOR MONTGOMERY.

LETTER XLI.

ANSWER TO THE ABOVE.

MY DEAR MONTGOMERY,—I have waited on Mr. Green, and have, I think, arranged all matters according to the very nicest sense of honour. Mr. Green would not allow himself to be in fault, inasmuch as Ponto was the first offender. Hereupon—animated by your spirit—I urged that, whatever might have been the indiscretion of Ponto, nothing could have justified a damn and a kick. Such words and acts were *tabooed* from good society; and therefore I begged to be favoured with the name of his friend, that we might settle the matter immediately. Mr. Green instantly complied with my desire; and, in a word, the meeting is to take place in Copenhagen-fields to-morrow morning.

We have arranged the matter after this fashion. Mr. Green has in his possession a remarkably fine bull-dog, by name Fury. Now, as Ponto was really the offending party, and I could in no way bring Mr. Green himself to meet the dog, it is decided that he shall appear in the person of Fury to fight his antagonist. True it is that Fury is in weight, breed, and bone so superior to Ponto, that I fear he will hardly escape with his life. These odds are, however, inevitable in the duello. For instance, Mr. Green never drew a trigger in all his days: now you can hit the stone out of a cherry at twenty yards. He has heard of this prowess, and therefore is content to be represented by his dog.

The meeting is to come off at five to-morrow morning, in Copenhagen-fields. Mr. Green's friend and myself have agreed, that whichever dog shall be worsted, its owner shall be declared in the wrong; whereupon—if life be spared—we have no doubt that a reconciliation of the animals may be effected, at a very small expense, at the first cook-shop.

I trust, my dear friend, that you will acknowledge the wisdom of this arrangement; and, moreover, as you are a leading man in the higher walk of the world, that you will exert yourself to the utmost to make the practice general. If fighting be really necessary, why not fight vicariously? I should like to know how many duels have taken place in which the honour, the dignity of human nature, would not have been equally well vindicated if the antagonists had been even terriers and turnspits.

As for washing out stains with blood, I for one know no process of moral chemistry that can effect it. There never was so miserable a mountebank as what is called Worldly Honour! It is this quacksalver that talks of washing wrongs out with blood, in the same way that a jackpudding at a fair vends powder of post to take out every household blot and stain. Both these creatures are imposters—with this difference, that one is a zany with a death's-head.

If men must fight, let them fight by deputy. Let us leave what is called "gentlemanly satisfaction" to be worked out for us by the lower animals. Your very high folks might settle their disputes with a couple of lions; whilst the vulgar might have their quarrels satisfactorily worked out by cocks and terriers.

Indeed, how many a feud, that was tragically ended with a bullet, might not have been settled by a maggot-race!

Yours truly,

JAMES BROWN.

P.S.—I shall send to-morrow morning, at half-past four, for Ponto. Let him be well washed and combed for the field, in case of the worst.

LETTER XLII.

FROM A SCHOOLMASTER IN WANT OF AN USHER, TO A FRIEND.

DEAR WILKINS,—I am getting on pretty well—boys are dropping in—but I am terribly in want of an usher. The fellow I have just got rid of spoke disrespectfully of our suet-dumplings, and so set a fatal example of insubordination to the pupils. Moreover, when the boys played at trap-ball and cricket, he had, I discovered, a knack of lying down upon the grass, and doing

nothing but stare at the sky—as if he had any business with *that*. So he's gone, and a capital riddance.

I never can thank you enough, my good friend, for your advice to go into the academy business. I had no notion that the trade was so easy. When I failed in my own line—and from no defect of mine, Wilkins, for there wasn't a bootmaker that I'd turn my back upon—I thought I was ruined outright. Little did I then dream that the trade of schoolmaster seemed made by Providence for unfortunate tradesmen who had failed in everything else. Little did I think that so many nice academies I could name—with their venetian blinds and bright brass knockers, and hearth-stoned steps,—and all so nice as if learning was the neatest and cleanest employment in the world,—little, I say, did I think that these places were little more than very handsome almshouses, supported by good-natured parents, for the unfortunate and helpless. But it is wonderful to see the confidence of fathers and mothers! When I was a bootmaker, the trouble I used to have with my customers!—now, all goes as smooth with 'em as neat's-foot oil.

I'm certain of it, Wilkins; yes, it does seem to me in human nature, that folks think more of their own corns, than of the children of their flesh. When I was in business, the fuss and fuming I used to have if a boot pinched a little! How my customer would storm and bluster! What anxiety, too, would he show when being measured; how many questions would he put to me, as though to come at my abilities for a good fit. I've known, too, some bold-faced people ask for references. Ha! those were days of worry and weariness; nothing of the sort now. No, no; fathers and mothers bring their little boys, and take it as a matter of course, that they'll have all manner of Greek, and Latin, and mathematics, and geography crammed into them. The parents have made up their minds to pay for the articles, and with a trustingness, which in this mean world is quite delightful, they believe the things will be delivered. It is quite enough for them, that the schoolmaster offers the goods—they never stop to inquire if the commodities are of the right sort. Folks don't buy even cabbages after this fashion; but then, children are not cabbages.

You will see, dear Wilkins, that I am in the best spirits with my new business; and I never can forget what I owe to you as an old academy master—a venerable birch, as I have heard you called with the deepest respect. Learning is, indeed, a delightful refuge against the disappointments and vexations of the world. How little did I think, when I paid sixpence in the pound, of the future cosiness in store for me in Crichton House! How little

did I dream that, having been tossed upon the deceitful waves of trade, I should here sit in a nice library—(according to your directions, I make it a sort of show-room for my boys' parents: when they see so many books on my shelves, they of course think I've a good many of them in my head)—a library smelling so of russia-leather, that it's difficult not to think one's-self a scholar. And all this, my excellent friend, I owe to you.

Pray add to the kindness, and find me out an usher. You know exactly the sort of animal that is required in so handsome an establishment as mine. Hoping that you will soon pick him up for me,

I remain, your obliged friend,

JACOB AWL.

LETTER XLIII.

ANSWER TO THE FOREGOING.

DEAR JACOB,—I am by no means surprised to hear that your usher is gone. I never liked the fellow: there was a great deal too much conceit in him. I once heard him talk very high about gentlemanly feelings; and so prepared myself to be startled at nothing. However, there is plenty of such cattle as you want in the market, and depend upon it, you'll soon be suited.

I am glad to find that you like your new business; but ha! Jacob—good as it is for folks in your strait, boarding-school work isn't half so good as it was. I remember when I was flourishing forty years ago: those were the times! Then there was no talk of march of intellect—no slang, vulgar nonsense about a schoolmaster being abroad; as if, indeed, he has any business to be abroad! no impudent interlopers setting up proprietary schools to the injury of the regular master. No: in those days the people who had been sent to school were at once acknowledged to be people of the better sort—people of education. There was no disputing about the matter. And then for the Universities, why then they *were* places for gentlemen. It was enough to say "an Oxford man," "a Cambridge man;" and folks at once allowed him to be a superior, a very extraordinary person. But now, what a revolutionary change! A man now, whether from Oxford or Cambridge, can't pass for a conjuror, unless he shows his tricks. People in these uncivil times have a vulgar habit of asking. "What has he done?" *It was not so in my day.*

However, bad as things are in the scholastic profession—lowered as they are—let us thank our stars, they are better here than in that wretched, frog-eating, wooden-shod country, France. There, indeed,—and I believe in other parts of the tyrannical Continent,—there is no liberty for learning: none at all. For instance, Jacob—you, at Crichton House, profess to teach all dead and living languages, mathematics, geometry, and all that. Well, and parents are contented to take your word upon the matter; with a straightforward John Bulliam they don't put any impertinent questions. Now, how would it be with you in France, Jacob! Why, you'd have been had up to a board, a committee, or something of the sort; and there you'd have been examined and searched, and your brains turned inside out, to see if there was that in 'em that you set up to teach. If there wasn't, why you'd been fined and clapt in gaol for trying to deal in learning without a licence. And therefore, Jacob, after all, let us be thankful that we live in a free country; in a happy land where the government—however sharp it may look after adulterated tobacco and illicit gin—does not interfere with the liberty of the subject; but permits him to trump himself off as knowing all sorts of things, leaving it to the rest of the world to find him out if they can. Yes, Jacob; night and morning return thanks that you are a free-born Briton. Had you been a bankrupt Frenchman, you must have sunk to the lowliness of a cobbler; you would have been mending the shoe-leather of your species in some hut or cellar, and not living in lamb's-wool, doing nothing in Crichton House. And for this comfort, Jacob, never forget that you are indebted to a bountiful government.

As for the usher, it has just come into my mind that I know a young man who will suit you. He is meek, civil, and a very small eater. I will immediately write to him, and you shall have his answer.

Your sincere old friend,

MATTHEW WILKINS.

P.S.—I shall venture to offer the young man 20*l.* a year.

LETTER XLIV.

TO AN USHER FOR A BOARDING SCHOOL.

SIR,—I feel glad with myself to believe that I am enabled to place you in a comfortable home. My friend, Mr. Jacob Awl, of Crichton House, has at this moment a vacancy for an usher. I have taken it upon myself—and I trust that this confidence on my part will not be abused by any bad conduct on yours—to recommend you. Mr. Awl, like myself, has a great respect for learning; and—as I have assured him of your proficiency in Greek and mathematics—he has come to the determination of offering you twenty pounds a-year, without your washing. There are altogether about three months' holidays in the twelvemonth, which time, let it be understood, you are expected to board and lodge yourself. As however,—*non semper tendit arcum Apollo* (you remember the adage, Mr. Maple), you will be enabled in the summer vacation to relax those energies which, as an honest man, you will be called upon to string to the utmost at Crichton House. There is Brighton, or Worthing, or Ramsgate, open to you. So much for pleasure.

As to business; you will remember twenty pounds per annum is the sum—a remarkable handsome stipend for any young man, who, having decorated his mind, is consequently careless of the finery of dress. Nothing so befits the true scholar, as a well-worn coat: it is to my mind the only proper badge of the man of real learning. Hence, you will be expected to dress cleanly, decently; but with not the least approach to foppery. My friend Mr. Awl is very particular on this point. He parted with one usher, only because he would insist upon wearing straps to his trousers.

Mr. Awl has upwards of seventy boys, and he will place sufficient confidence in you—that is, upon my recommendation—to hand them over to your keeping. Hence, you will be expected to see them all safe in bed; to have an eye upon them whilst dressing and washing; to take your meals with them; to never leave the school-room; and, above all, when the young gentlemen recreate themselves in the play-ground, or take a walk, or go to church, you are to accompany them, giving your most vigilant attention, your every thought to their doings, and indeed at all times and in every respect studying the interest of your employer as if t'were doubly your own. For you will remember

that the salary is twenty pounds per annum ! There are positively many footmen who do not get so much.

But the money, to a man of enlarged and truly scholastic mind, is as nothing. It is, if you rightly consider it, the dignity of the calling that makes it really valuable. You are to remember that you are, in fact, making future citizens ; that you are, if I may so express myself, creating a part of the future mind of the country, and ought therefore to look upon salary as the mere inevitable dross—the something that the dealings of the world make necessary—but as altogether dust in comparison with the golden satisfaction that, whatever in old age may be your fate, you may probably have taught the youthful mind those noble lessons which have obtained for it station, wealth, and honours.

It is a great satisfaction to me that I am able to place you so happily as at Crichton House. I have every belief that you will not disgrace my recommendation, and am

Your well-wisher,

MATTHEW WILKINS.

P.S.—Whatever they may be, let me advise you not to depreciate the suet-dumplings.

LETTER XLV.

THE ANSWER.

SIR,—Thank you for your kind intentions. Happily, I am otherwise provided for. Having served five years as usher, I am fully able to appreciate the blissful liberty I now enjoy. Sir, I remember where I have been, and so remembering, think myself at this present time in Paradise.

It may be true enough that a threadbare coat is the proper livery of the scholastic drudge of a school ; but alas ! sir, I had not sufficient philosophy to bear rags and darnings with complacency ; and moreover to endure the wit of the young gentlemen—levelled as it often was—at the poverty of their teacher. For five miserable winters, trying to look very genteel for the respectability of your establishment, did I shiver in one thin coat. A comforter—there was a mockery, I always thought, in the word—about my neck, vainly essayed the service of a surtout. And now, sir, I am warmly, cosily clothed, and can put on a bluff countenance at the elements.

Judge you, sir, of the happiness of my present state. It is true, I am sometimes up early and late ; but then, sir, I am abroad in the world. I am looking upon life in its every aspect. I am not nailed to a desk eight hours a day, with little dunderhead boys droning their lessons in my ears till they sing again. I may now and then have my little disputes with folks ; but I am not doomed to the practical tricks of a set of young rascals, who think it a prime piece of mischief to quiz a "beggary usher." I may have to send certain folks home to their beds, but I have not to rouse them up in the morning, and be answerable for their washed faces and combed hair at breakfast.

Beneath your roof, I had I remember one hour a day—yes, one whole hour, as you would say, to myself : the hour before bedtime : now, sir, I have hour upon hour in which I can reflect upon life and death ; in which I can again and again call to my memory the glory of the poets, which glory I make a sort of armour to my soul, that with invincible serenity it may bear the buffets of the world about me. I am now in the country ; and at solitary midnight, I can conjure up old Homer, and *Æschylus*, and Sophocles, and Thucydides, and so make them walk and talk with me, and thus enjoy immortal company. Now and then, it is true, some squalid thing—some harsh noise—will for a time scare them away ; but, with little effort, I can manage to bring them back again, and make them familiar to me as before.

Happy liberty ! Above all things, I am not expected to look after half a hundred boys while they play. I am not accountable for every rent in their nether corduroys—for every button violated from their jackets—for the black eye that Jones gave to Robinson, returned with a sanguinary *nasus* by Brown. True it is, that I am still a sort of overlooker of juveniles—but let them quiz me if they dare.

No, sir, it is in vain that you seek to tempt me back to Academic groves. I am too much enchanted with my present liberty to—but, sir, when you know what I am, you will at once acknowledge the superiority, the abounding comforts of my place, compared to that of usher at a boarding-school.

Know, then, sir, that for the last three months, I have enjoyed the appointment of full private in the New Police. Have I not said enough ? Could you, would you, after this, have the heart to lure me to Crichton House and questionable suet-dumplings ?

Yours, with thanks,

MARTIN MAPLE.

LETTER XLVI.

FROM A PEASANT, FOR AN ALLOTMENT OF LAND, TO A
LANDOWNER.

HONOURED SIR,—Hoping that you will be pleased to pardon the boldness of a poor man who wants to keep his wife and children, I take up my pen to write. And, honoured sir, I hope you will forgive me, if I say that I feel a little happy that I am able to put a few words to paper,—it being a sort of comfort to a man, howsoever poor he may be.

My boldness, honoured sir, is this. It is, under your favour and consideration, to ask of your kindness, to let me have an acre of land : or if I am too bold in asking a whole acre, half or a quarter of the same. I know that it may be thought a little high and daring in me to ask for such a favour, seeing that your estates are let out in large farms. It is, perhaps, a presumption, and—as I've been told—a sort of flying in the face of property, for a man who isn't rich enough to farm a thousand acres—who hasn't money for cattle and bone-dust, and all that—to think of having a little slice of land, just to grow a few things on for himself and children ; land only being for them who can have a lot of it, or none. Nevertheless, sir, I hope for your kindness. I've been all along used to go to church, though I hope I may be forgiven for it, I haven't been these two months, seeing that my clothes are all in such rags, that, as one of the churchwardens told me, they were quite a disgrace to a respectable congregation. Well, sir, I say I used to go to church, but I never heard there whether the Garden of Eden was twenty thousand acres or not—perhaps the gentlemen who set their faces against small allotments know it to have been a very large farm indeed, and so think they have religion upon their side, when they refuse a poor man a little patch for his own spade. I know that it was made a part of the punishment of sin—a part of the curse of heaven—that man should eat his bread in the sweat of his face. That, however wicked he may have been, he should not on his own account be suffered to eat his bread at all, does seem to me—and my heart is so full, I can't help saying it,—very like a curse coming from the other place. I suppose, too, they who eat their bread from the sweat of other people, have never sinned at all. I hope, honoured sir, you will forgive these words ; but my pen runs away with me like.

When I ask, honoured sir, for this bit of land, I mean, of course, to pay the very highest price you can get for it. I know that land let out in little bits is always made to fetch more than when let by the lump. This, of course, the poor must expect. It is so in all things. My wife gives more for her bit of soap and candle (when she can buy it), more for my bit of 'bacco, than if we could buy such things by the pound, like respectable people. And it isn't, then, to be expected that a great landlord, even though he may be a Duke to boot, will do otherwise than the keeper of a chandler's-shop. No, sir, though my neighbours say I'm a bold fellow, and have strange nonsense running in my head, I don't expect *that*.

If people weren't so foolish as to think otherwise, there would never have been such a noise about a gentleman who said, "If he let a lug of land for fivepence when he could get eightpence for it, he should be giving away threepence to the tenant." The gentleman only said what nearly all the world do with one another every day of their lives. I was reading in a London newspaper that was lent me a day or two ago, where all sorts of things were advertised to be sold one under the other; coats, and waistcoats, and trousers for almost no money at all. Well, the people who buy 'em say it's no business of theirs how the things are made; that's not their concern,—all they want, as a duty to themselves and families, is to get a cheap penn'orth; as it were to wrap themselves comfortably up in a bargain, and then go with their prayer-books to church to show it. If we could ever think that the time would come when folks wouldn't bargain with folks, as though because they'd money to buy, they'd eat their fellow-creatures up—if it isn't, indeed, bold in me to say fellow-creatures—if we could ever hope for such a time, why, sir, then this world would be indeed much nearer heaven than, perhaps, poor men have any right to expect. And yet, sir, church has puzzled me now and then. When the parson has told us that we are all made of earth, I have, I own it, now and then looked into a fine pew or two, and if it's a sin, I hope I may be pardoned for it—and I have sometimes doubted it. To be sure, soil is so different; the better sort of folks may be the rich and loamy; and the poor, the cold stiff clay, only fit for draining.

Still, sir, folks say that things are brightening up for the poor. There are a good many signs of it. Only last autumn, I'm told, three real lords played at cricket somewhere with some shopkeepers. A man in our village—who's reckoned to know something—has said it isn't unlikely that in less than twenty years a squire may now and then join in quoits or foot-ball with day-labourers. If ever this should come to pass, it must lead to

good things. For of course the matter won't stop there. The squire, after making so familiar, will look in at the men's houses; will talk with their wives and little ones about their food, and their clothes, and such like—giving them a kind word and a helping hand when they want it. This, of course, will come of the matter; otherwise, for my part, I can't see such very great good in it. Politeness is a nice thing, and sometimes warms a poor man's heart more than he can tell it: but politeness itself won't put a 'tato on the plate when there isn't one. Folks can't eat quoits and foot-balls.

And now, sir, I hope you will be so good as to let me have this bit of land? It will, I feel, make quite a man of me. Yes, sir, I mean that work and no other. As it is, sir—I don't know how it can be—but somehow at times I don't feel a man at all. I seem at if I'd no business in the world; as if I was a sort of toad or slug upon the soil; an interloper on the land, having no right even to make a footmark in it. The sun doesn't seem to shine for me—nor the wheat to shoot—nor the hedge-flowers to blow. I feel sometimes as if poverty in this world was made the mark of Cain, and was upon me; with this hard difference, too, that any man might smite me for it.

And then, sir, the temptations that fly and run about one! I mean the game, sir. Many a time, when I've heard the pheasant crow, it has somehow sounded—though not a bit like it—like one of my children crying for food, and then for a minute my brain has been in a blaze, and I'd have done anything. When things are at the worst, and starvation is for days in my cupboard, the devil—or something like him—has sent the hares running about me, as though on purpose to be knocked down with a stick. It's a hard matter, sir, to keep one's hands off a dinner running at one's feet—a dinner that it's hard to think belongs to anybody in particular.

And therefore, honoured sir, I do hope for a bit of land. If it's no bigger, one may say, than a lark's turf, like the lark I know I can whistle upon it and be happy. And so, honoured sir, asking your pardon for my boldness, as a poor man, in thinking of such a thing,

I remain,

Yours humbly to command,

ABEL WEED.

LETTER XLVII.

THE LANDLORD'S ANSWER.

ABEL WEED,—Had you known anything of the true principles of political economy, you would never have written such a letter to me, a landowner. Know, that it is much better for you that you should not have even a quarter of an acre—that it is for the social good of all that you should remain as you are.

THEOPHILUS CANAAN, Bart.

LETTER XLVIII.

FROM A BACHELOR TO A HUSBAND ON THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS
OF HIS WIFE.

MY DEAR SIMPSON,—As an old,—old friend, I feel no hesitation in addressing you upon a subject, which the weakness of most people makes a very nice and delicate one. Married men are, I know, ridiculously sensitive to opinions passed by their friends upon their wives. You, my dear fellow, are not of these. No : you remain unchanged by matrimony ; you are the same transcendent philosopher you ever were. Hence, I feel that I can talk to you about your wife as upon any other subject that tests a man's better taste. I can criticise your helpmate with the same free judgment that I would pass upon your horses or your wines. Feeling this, I the more readily respond to your request, and tell you at once freely and frankly "what I think" of the lady whom the complaisance of the world denominates your better half.

I had prepared myself, from what you had said, to see a full-blown, radiant beauty. Now, my dear boy, your wife is not brilliantly handsome ; certainly not. She has, however, a very pleasing face—very nice expressive eyes ; very nice. And when she has seen a little more of the world—when, too, she can have benefited more by your counsel—so that she may achieve a little more self-control, she will, I have no doubt, be a very charming, comfortable sort of little body. At present—now what I say, Simpson, accept as the surest proof of my friendship for you—at present, there is now and then an air of constraint ; and then,

again, an air of forced vivacity about her, that is hardly natural to good society. This little defect, however, time and your good judgment will remedy.

Her conversation is sprightly ; certainly sprightly. I did not however—and I assure you I watched most vigilantly—I did not detect in it those flashes of wit, that radiant fancy, of which, ere you made the lady your wife, you wrote to me so much. Matrimony, however, may be fatal to these good gifts ; wit and fancy may not submit to the small circle of a wedding-ring. For myself, there is nothing I admire so much in a woman as a discreet silence ; nothing that so much annoys me as her vain attempts to shine. If anything can take the beauty from beautiful lips, it is when they evidently try to drop pearls and diamonds, and let fall nothing worth the picking up. I will not say that Mrs. Simpson does this ; certainly not ; nevertheless, my dear friend, you may teach her with great advantage that now and then the best adornment of a wife is taciturnity.

You were wont to praise your wife's temper. I have so much respect for your judgment, that I am sure no artifices of courtship could blind you to a defect. And yet, my dear fellow, the whole education of woman from the cradle to the altar is one long course of—no, hang it ! I will not say deceit. Bachelor as I am, and intend for ever to be, I will not put down that ugly word. Nevertheless, it is extraordinary how women can hide their real temper until the parson, as they think, gives them a legal right to show it. It is really wonderful to know how very long talons may sleep in the velvet paw of courtship before the "amen" of the clerk calls them out. I cannot think it is thus with Mrs. Simpson : oh, no. Still I watched her—and my heart had a slight misgiving when I saw her frown at your ventured opinion, that the sweet-sauce was a little burnt. However, perhaps it may have been only her peculiar mode of look, and not a frown. You, my dear boy, know best ; for who, indeed, ought to judge between man and wife ?

Touching your wife's music, I do not think her ear very good, but it may be improved. Her voice—to be sure it may have altered since you wrote so much about it—is thin as wire : and by the way, not silver wire. Her execution is a little too hurried ; as though she would hide defects under an assumed brilliancy of fingering. All this, however, time and practice may remedy. Apropos, who taught her Italian ? Her pronunciation—in a word, my dear fellow, your wife's Italian—Lancashire witch as she is—is Lancashire Italian.

However, who in a wife—as wives are made by present education—is to expect perfection ? You, my dear friend, were

ever too philosophic, too wise, to look for excellence, and therefore will, I have no doubt, be very comfortable with your present little helpmate. Doubtless, you might have done better—but then, again, you might have done worse, and so, all things considered, it is as well as it is.

You asked me, “what I thought of your wife—candidly?” I have endeavoured to illustrate my old friendship for you by giving you an honest, ingenuous answer. All husbands are, I know, not to be so openly dealt with. But the experience of twenty years tells me that you are a friend and a philosopher.

Ever, my dear Simpson, yours truly,

FRANK DAVIS.

P.S.—Remember : we dine at the Club on Thursday.

LETTER XLIX.

THE HUSBAND'S ANSWER.

DEAR DAVIS,—Your frankness is charming—delightful ! How few friends would have had the fine moral courage to write such a letter ! How well, too, have you judged my philosophy ! I assure you, I have laughed—laughed heartily at your epistle : it has amused me mightily.

As for Mrs. Simpson's beauty, why in a wife, I take it, that is a commodity which has peculiar reference to her husband. To be sure, beauty may exist, and some eyes never see it. I wonder now, what the mole or the owl really and truly thinks of the sun ? But doubtless, *you* can tell.

It is quite true, that Mrs. Simpson has some feminine diffidence. She was not, unfortunately you may think, brought up in a garrison ; and has never yet headed the conversation in a mess-room. I believe the age of silver preceded the age of brass.

As for her wit and fancy,—you know, my dear sir, how difficult it is to define those qualities : how much more difficult with some people to appreciate them. How very much they are wasted upon them. I know, in some countries, it is the fashion to hang the heads of mules with melodious, semi-toned bells ; but whoever could hope that the brutes should understand their beautiful modulation ?

The temper of Mrs. Simpson is—but it is not for a husband to expatiate on the household excellences of his wife. No ; they

are too sacred in their nature to be defiled by ink : they are to be respected, worshipped, in the innermost core of the conjugal heart. I may merely observe this—Mrs. Simpson *never* frowns. My wine is, I know, potent, and—dear sir—you were evidently very thirsty. Hence, you may not be accountable for the then haziness of your vision.

Your exceeding thirst, too—seeing how industriously you tried to sate it—may have rendered you a little unfit to criticise music. We all know what Midas thought of Apollo.

With respect to my appointment to dine at the Club, I have this morning—at the request of Mrs. Simpson—withdrawn my name as a member. Hence, I cannot have the pleasure of meeting you. Nevertheless, I am,

Yours obliged,
JOHN SIMPSON.

LETTER L

FROM A PUBLISHER TO AN AUTHOR.

DEAR SIR,—Upon my word, this is too bad ! We have been standing for copy for two days. Really too bad. I would not wish to write anything that might be thought severe ; no, I trust I have a greater respect for letters. Nevertheless, it does appear to me very strange that gentlemen authors are the only sort of people with whom there is nothing like regularity. It is never so with other tradesmen. If I want a coat, or a pair of boots, by a stated day—the tailor, the bootmaker, never disappoints me. And yet men who write *will* take such liberties ! as if pen and ink gave 'em a sort of license to do what no respectable tradesman ever thinks of doing. Business is business all the world over ; and there should be the same punctuality in making poems as in making pantaloons. When writers can't be punctual they ought to give up the trade, and take to other employment.

I do not deny that your head may have been a little bit out of order—that your spirits may have been low or shattered—that all this beautiful world, as you once very finely said to me, may have seemed to you as if it was made of wet brown paper. I don't deny this ; but then what have I said to you, again and again ? Ought not men who are liable to such ridiculous crotchets, to work double-tides when they are quite well, so that they may always have copy in advance of the blue devils ? I, sir who do not pretend to what some folks call the dignity of an

author—I have always been in advance of the world ; I have always caught time by the forelock in all things.

Permit me to say, there is a good deal of nonsense talked by you gentlemen authors—to the great inconvenience of the unfortunate tradesmen who deal with you—about waiting for inspiration. Pooh ! It's very like waiting for a policeman when you want him—you may wait all day, and never light upon him. Inspiration, sir, if you only persevere, comes with pen-and-ink : in the same way that a pump that seems dry gives water with pumping.

Again, some of you gentry affect to be affected by the weather, as if you wrote in quicksilver and not in ink. Doctor Johnson, sir, contained in himself as many people now called authors, as there are sticks in a faggot. And what says Doctor Johnson about the effect of season and weather ? Why he growls a laugh at it. Yes, sir, that great man would have written *Paradise Lost* quite as well in a coal-mine as in Arcadia, if there is such a place. Besides, when a man has served his time to writing, it's after all—I'm sure of it—nothing more than a knack. Just as a woman knits garters and gossips at the same time, he can go on writing his book and think nothing at all about it. This is done every day by some people : I could only wish, sir, that, with all your talent—for you have a sort of talent, I don't deny it—you could do the same thing. It would be money in your pocket and to me a very great convenience.

It is true you have written much ; nevertheless, as I say, there is a good deal of meat upon you yet—a good deal of meat. Some people may think this a coarse phrase of mine—I don't. On the contrary, I think it significant and original. I look upon authors simply as a butcher looks upon Southdown-mutton ; with merely an eye to the number of pounds to be got out of 'em. You know that my character is frankness. I have lost a great deal by it—but I can't help that.

And now, by ten to-morrow I must have the remainder of this book. Work—work : you know you can take to your bed, if necessary, when you have done it. At all events, *do* the book. And after all, as somebody says, what is a book but words—and words but breath ? Really you must not be after ten to-morrow ; if so, there are now, thank heaven, twelve posts a day, and I have directed Biggs to write to you every hour.

Yours faithfully,

JOHN CURLL.

LETTER LI. (AND LAST.)

THE AUTHOR'S ANSWER.

DEAR SIR,—With this, you have the last of the copy. Thank heaven!

It is very true, that I have not the punctuality of either your boot-maker or your tailor: but then I am punished for my iniquity, for neither have I anything like their banker's account. It is also the misfortune of my craft to admit not of the services of either journeymen or 'prentices; otherwise, I too might be very punctual by the hands of other people.

It is very true that, for the past fortnight, I have had a certain sickness of the brain, from, I believe, over-work. It is, perhaps, possible, that even one of your horses, if made to carry double, might, for a time, require the repose of the stable. Not that I would think of comparing my brain to the horse-flesh that calls you master. Indeed, an author may be rather likened to an elephant,—seeing he frequently has to carry a house upon his back filled with a numerous family.

You are pleased to say I have a great deal of meat upon me. I can only say in answer, that it shall be my especial care that, for the future, none of the said meat shall be transformed into your mutton-chops.

With this determination, Sir,

I remain,

Your obedient Servant,

SKETCHES OF THE ENGLISH

SKETCHES OF THE ENGLISH.

THE PEW-OPENER.

EVEN in the temple—at the very shrine—where meekness, self-humiliation, contrition of heart, and remorse of spirit, kneel, and make sweet sacrifice ; yea even there, plies the Pew-Opener : the busy servitor of pride ; the watchful handmaid of distinction ; the soft-spoken waiter upon Mammon : yes, in the temple, the hopeful looker-out for sixpences.

Pews ! What a sermon might we not preach upon these little boxes !—small abiding-places of earthly satisfaction ! sanctuaries for self-complacency !—in God's own house, the chosen chambers for man's self-glorification ! What an instructive colloquy might not the bare deal bench of the poor church-goer hold with the soft-cushioned seat of the miserable sinners who chariot it to prayers, and with their souls arrayed in sackcloth and ashes, yet kneel in silk and miniver. How would the thumbbed, dog's-eared, discoloured, sheep-cased prayer-book, discourse it with the volume bound in velvet, clasped with gold, and borne to its place by stalwart footman, powdered specially for the sabbath.

Pews ! How often, in your half-filled spaces, may be seen the smug possessor,—the thrifty, respectable Christian,—with his ears open to precepts of boundless charity to all men, glancing coldly at his pewless brother standing in the crowded aisle, and never beckoned within ? Reader, have you not beheld pews peopled with the sons of pride,—the true-begotten of worldly ease, who from the softness of their seats have seemed to look more serenely round at the lowly folk without ? Miserable sinners ! who once a-week go through the ceremony of seeming to think

themselves dust ; children of darkness ! who, for an example to society, permit themselves once a-week to be addressed as " the sons and daughters of corruption, the brothers and sisters of the worm !" Lowly, contrite-hearted men, in purple and fine linen, who, with abased eyelids, and faces steeped in two hours' humility, make up their minds to endure a talk of the judgment and take a parson for the sake of appearance.

But the bell rings to church ! The alehouse bolt is drawn ; no sign of traffic in the street, save where the late fishmonger takes his hurried way with turbot to my lord's ; no apple-stall profanes the sabbath-light ; and irreligious barbers, if they shave, must shave in sin and secrecy. Long lines of parish boys and girls, chattering, whispering, grinning, are led to church by master and mistress, who deeming religion a terrible and bitter thing, look savagely serious. The two or three children who carry pewter medals look graver than the rest.

The Pew-Opener, with her kerchief of speckless white ; her face put in order for the morning service ; with key in hand, and active, noiseless step,—is here, is there, folding her lambs as fast as they enter. With almost a smile, and a motion very near a curtsy, she welcomes some ; with aspect serious as a death's head, she leads the way with others. To whispering children, she looks terrible as the Witch of Endor—a witch threatening the advent of the beadle !

Mark how daintily she doth her office ! The service is begun ; and there is a stranger leaning in the aisle with a sixpenny face,—perhaps, a shilling countenance. Poor man ! although he pays church-rates, he has no pew ; he hath helped to build the fabric, and to pay the preacher, but there is no seat for him save on the back benches ; and that is a place (for only mark his coat, the beaver sleekness of his hat, the complexion of his linen) not to be thought of : how can he, who comes to confess himself a filthy vessel before the Lord ; a sin-stained lump of mortal clay ; a moral leper ; a child of iniquity, deserving everlasting fire ;—how can he, Peter Wagstaff, a small tradesman with the best of prospects, sit on the same bench with the old, paralytic man who now-and-then does his errands ? Peter Wagstaff is not proud,—by no means proud ; no man—that is, no Christian—ought to take pride to church with him ; but, for all that, although his sometime servant makes room for his employer, Peter Wagstaff sees him not, and, in fact, would rather stand.

Our Pew-Opener beholds the apostolical fight in the breast of Peter ; beholds, and walks to the rescue. Walks ! The spider traversing its web above the church poor-box (for thou, great Hogarth hast seen and fixed the insect in immortal film) makes

louder noise than our Pew-Opener pacing the rushes. She approaches the stranger ; her eloquent forefinger beckons him forward ; surely, the lock and key are not of iron, but velvet, they work so noiselessly ;—the man is in the pew, and, being in, he feels himself, as he is, respectable. He is now comfortable, and can join in the responses declaratory of his own unworthiness with befitting placidity ; he can now pay every proper attention to the denunciation of penal fire, no longer fearing to be elbowed by his inferiors. Nay, when the glories of immortality are promised, they lose no portion of their lustre from the startling idea violently pressed upon him, that his neighbours on the bench,—the wretchedly poor, the drudges of the world,—are, with himself, to be made participators of the gladness. He is, he owns it in sonorous tones, a “miserable sinner,” but, notwithstanding, a respectable man.

Did the Pew-Opener, when she contemplated this service to the self-respect of Peter Wagstaff, come at right conclusions ? Was his face only worth a tester ? More ; for Peter has just set up in the neighbourhood, is a bachelor, and this being his first visit to the parish church, he has disbursed a whole shilling. The Pew-Opener seats herself on her square piece of projecting wood, and, with one eye towards the door, and the other on her prayer-book, with occasional wanderings towards the children in the gallery, is profoundly wrapt in the service.

Another visitor appears at the door ; step by step he creeps up the aisle ; our Pew-Opener sees him, but is determined to see him not. Let him sit with the poor people ; why should such as he affect the vanity of a pew ? Better than he are on the benches ;—are we not all flesh and blood ; all poor worms ; all things of corruption ; all *creatures* for the grave ? Such are the thoughts of the Pew-Opener, and she reads hard at her book ; she sees not the candidate yearning for promotion above the common. There is some reason for this ? There is ; for thrice has our Pew-Opener given “that person” a seat, and he has merely nodded thanks,—made a pantomime acknowledgment of the favour. The Pew-Opener reads on.

Be it known to all whom it may concern, that we renounce His Holiness the Pope, and all his works ; be it fully understood, that we have a proper horror of Guy Fawkes and the Jesuits, as Jesuits ; and, therefore, when we say a word in praise of a custom observed in Catholic sanctuaries, we do not for that reason believe in Holy Water. There are no pews in continental cathedrals : there the rich sit with the poor ; the beggar says his paternoster close to the ear of the man of ingots. The dame of fashion kneels next to the market-woman, who has put down her

load to make her offering to her saint : there, all is common dust ; there, no porcelain of the human clay ; there, all food for worms. And thus would we have it in Protestant temples. When Luther reformed the church, he surely never intended to cut it up into little private boxes for the especial use of worldly pride and worldly distinction. In all his reveries, we will be sworn for him, Luther never dreamt of a Pew-Opener ; and yet Weaver tells us, that, after the Reformation, "there were cushions in churches to sleep upon ;" and Rudder, another church historian, informs us, that it was customary for the squire of the parish to withdraw to smoke his pipe during the sermon, and "return to the blessings." The Pew-Opener, doubtless, came in with the cushions,—was found a necessary monitor to call the squire from tobacco to the benediction.

We have, however, left the immediate subject of this paper seated outside a pew, still meditating her religious lesson. Now-and-then she rises, creeps, mole-footed, down the aisle, finds the proper hymn for the inexperienced psalm-singer, looking somewhat reprovingly at the ignorance of the offender, cries "hush" at the creaking shoe-leather of an unreflecting sinner, and wonders, with the church full of a November fog, how people *can* cough "in the sweetest parts of the discourse." The sermon draws to a close ; at "sixthly and lastly" the Pew-Opener again glides down the aisle, again applies the silent key to the mute lock, and again the doors stand open for the egress of the better part of the congregation,—the fortunate and respectable holders of pews. As they depart, the Pew-Opener hath a ready curtesy, and a ready smile ; ventures to ask about the health of an absent wife or daughter ; hazards some admiring words at the good looks of the youngest child ; and, with a brief, praiseful allusion to the "noble sermon" of the day, proceeds to other patrons. The church is empty, and the Pew-Opener enters the various sanctuaries sacred to those who can pay for them : here she diligently puts in order the hassocks, gathers up the books, and departs for dinner.

If every hassock had a tongue, might tell the thoughts, and reveal the inmost workings of the hearts, of those who, in attitudes of humiliation, kneel upon them ! Look at this one, this lump of softest wool, covered with cloth of purple : this has borne the bulky mortality of a rich and arrogant man—of one who, every week, confesses himself a miserable sinner, and in that confession prays aloud for grace,—whose son is banned the paternal door, for that he has taken a wife, whose only vice was poverty ! Here is another, yet warm from the knees of a domestic tyrant, who comes to church to sacrifice to the humility, the love, and search-

ing tenderness of the Divine Example ; and who, returning home, shall make his wife tremble at his frown, and the little hearts of his children quail at his foot-fall. Take a third : this is part of the pew furniture of a man who lives, and becomes sleek, upon the falsehoods, the little tyrannies of the world, who eats the daily bread of heartless litigation, whose whole life is a lie to every Christian precept ; and, Judas to Truth, who kisses it only to sell it ! Yet will this man pray, respond in prayer, run through the Creed, and glibly troll the Decalogue,—a human clock, wound up to strike on Sundays. And in this pew will kneel the withered usurer, a most respectable man, and one in parish office, whose heart glows at the worldly cunning of Jacob, and who, losing the spirit in the letter, dotes, above all measure, on the parable of the talents.* These come to church—make the employment of the Pew-Opener—to keep up the farce that their worldly brethren, with themselves, agree to act ; they congregate to perform a ceremony, and that over, the week lies fair before them. They come to church “deaf adders,” and deaf they quit it : and as the weekly hypocrites come and go, the devil stands in the porch and counts them.

The Pew-Opener is, necessarily, a critic upon sermons. We do not assert that she knows much of ancient divinity ; though, were she suddenly made acquainted with the pulpit works of our old Churchmen, we doubt not she would relish the “shilling sermon” of old Latimer, preached with apostolic courage at the palace, before the young King Edward. On sermons of the present day, the Pew-Opener, premising that she opens in a church of some importance, may be trusted. Bishops have preached before her ; and when she has retired to her home, she has faithfully compared the various merits of former pastors for the day with the labours of the bishop just departed. Episcopacy has no stouter champion than the Pew-Opener ; for when a bishop mounts the pulpit, the church is crowded, seats are in demand : a blessed thing, as she may over her tea declare to her landlady, —a happy thing, as showing that there is yet some religion in the world. To the Pew-Opener, sermons in lawn are sermons, indeed : for she loves to see the church thronged within, besides having without full six hundred yards of Christian humility in chariots and carriages.

The Pew-Opener has a great reverence for a fashionable

* Roger Coke, in his “*Detection of the Court and State of England*,” tells a story of a muckworm, who gave his nephew twenty shillings for preaching against usury, that, others being dissuaded, he might make better bargains.

preacher, even if he have not a mitre. Fashionable preachers are, however, of two kinds. The dear and gracious Dr. Smoothly,—who, in his time, has been private clergyman to two lords, one a cabinet minister,—his face shining as with oil from Canaan, and words, dropping honey, accustomed to make religion up for high-bred and delicate stomachs, enters the pulpit as he would tread the carpet of a drawing-room. The doctor is a worthy descendant of the French divine, who, preaching before the king, in an unguarded moment, astonished the monarch by declaring that “all men must die;” but as speedily amended his indiscretion by adding, with a penitent look at his royal auditor, “almost all.” Dr. Smoothly touches death with a very gentle hand: if he must introduce him to the better sort of people, he does it gently, courteously, gracefully: he disdains to send gentlefolks into hysterics, by taking up the scare-crow, death, and flinging its rattling bones into the faces of the congregation. Is it not vastly uncivil to tell beautiful women, with pulses of hope, happiness, and love—the whole world opening like a garden upon them—that they, the delicate, the lovely, the admired, the flattered,—that they are meat for worms?—that they, with faces fair as angels, are to be crammed beneath the earth, like the wretch who died in the workhouse to-day, or on the gibbet yesterday? Doctor Smoothly thinks this manner highly inhuman, and therefore takes all heed not to ruffle the plumes of worldly pride—to pluck the smallest feather from the tail of vanity. He therefore treats of death as a sort of vague probability, and speaks of the grave as a pit dug somewhere, and into which some people have sometimes fallen. The doctor, as a part of his soothing system, rarely talks of the abode of naughty spirits; or if, by chance, he touches upon it, it is with a manner that declares its utter vulgarity, its extreme meanness.—In a word, Doctor Smoothly makes hell very low.

The Reverend Mr. Yewberry is a very different divine; yet is he fashionable. His church is crowded with a congregation, filled with elbowing hundreds, panting to receive the anathemas of the indignant spirit, who darts his sacred fire at the folk in lofty places, and makes it his especial duty to turn inside out the elect and chosen of the land. Royalty comes *incog.* to listen to him; cabinet ministers are seen in the gallery; court demireps give an hour to the new prophet; young members of parliament study him for the vehemence of his style, and the peculiar felicity of his invectives. Mr. Yewberry is taken by the fashionable world as a kind of tonic; he serves, for a time, to brace up the relaxed *system of the mode*, but is never to be thought of as a spiritual *regimen for life*. He is visited as a sort of evangelical fire-eater;

and princes, earls, and countesses, having witnessed his extraordinary performance, quit him with a wonder how "he can do it." He is, however, fashionable upon the strength of his merciless dogmas, and blazes a pillar of fire in the pulpit, for—six months, at least: he then burns to less numerous admirers; and, at length, settles into enduring brilliancy, and tolerable heat.

Mr. Yewberry is, of course, a great favourite with our Pew-Opener: she thinks the world has some chance of amendment since he has taken it in hand, and complacently surveying her crowded pews, feels very many hopes of human regeneration. Smoothly is a darling pastor; Yewberry a powerful divine: one touches mortal frailties with a *patte de velours*; the other shakes over the head of the offending Adam a scourge of vipers.

We have hitherto spoken of the Pew-Opener in her calling during divine service; in her delicate duty of locking and unlocking doors; in the serene self-possession with which she at times advances one hand, and then, as if nothing had happened, returns it to her pocket. She has, however, her times of professional gladness; when to smirk and smile, and tread quickly about the church, to be very busy when there is nothing to be done, to be greatly interested at what, to her, is a dull repetition of a dull scene, is her duty, being one of the sources of her profit: we speak of weddings. Observe, how gladly good Mrs. Spikenard smiles upon the happy couple, and the crowd of friends, as she meets them at the door; what approving gladness at the solemnity about to be performed is in every look: how quickly she trips along the aisle, and ushers them to the pew, where, until all things are ready for the sacrifice, and before it is too late, the plighted parties are mercifully allowed the benefit of some minutes' consideration. She hovers about the bride and bridegroom, the bridesmaids, and, indeed, the whole nuptial party, as if she had positively a personal interest in the matter, assures the young couple that the clergyman will not be long; and, at length, when the good man is gowned, and ready for the service, comes, with her wrinkled face, all smiles and satisfaction, to tell the gladsome news that Mr. Tie'emtight is quite prepared.

The marriage party dispose themselves,—we mean, the clerk disposes them, for never does man, as principal, seem so helpless as when about to undergo the ceremony of marriage, another ceremony, perhaps, excepted. Here you will see a fine, stalwart bridegroom, with whalebone whiskers, and standing six feet one in his silk stockings, picked out by the clerk, and somewhat impe-

ratively placed upon the very spot where he is to suffer, the gentleman himself having, apparently, no voice or will in the matter. Well, the bride and bridegroom are placed; and, at a respectful distance, watches the Pew-Opener. Sometimes, marriage is a case of fainting; we have known it to rise to the tragic passion of hysterics; mere swooning, however, is at the altar common as white muslin, and gives, to the spectator at least, by no means an unpleasant interest to the scene. Let the bride faint to her heart's content: the Pew-opener—astute, experienced woman—is prepared for the sufferer. Suddenly, the bride, like a bent lily, declines her pale, beautiful head: the bridegroom looks helplessly around, when, close at his elbow, brought thither as by a charm, stands the Pew-Opener, with a goblet of crystal water, drawn that very morning from the spring, in readiness for the white lips of the newly-married. The glass is taken, and the Pew-Opener, profuse in her remedies, proffers a bottle of salts kept hot in her hand for the last ten minutes.

Well, the swooning is past, and the signing is over, and (after the clerk and the beadle) the Pew-Opener takes the liberty of calling down upon the heads of the couple, now made one, all the very many blessings of this mortal world. Her disinterested wishes are generally rewarded; when, according to the sense manifested of their value, the youthful pair are sullenly dismissed from the thoughts of the Pew-Opener to the thorny ways of this bramble-skirted earth; or she pronounces them worthy of all happiness, "being as handsome a couple as ever the sun shone on."

There is another solemnity at which the Pew-Opener assists with considerable alacrity; that of baptism. Here her experience, her knowledge of the world, as picked up and cultivated in the temple of the Lord, stands her in exceeding help. She can at a glance espy the respectable mothers and godmothers, the fathers well to do, and the godfathers of sufficient purse; and, benefitting by her knowledge, she bestows them in separate pews, wide away from the poorer sort. And there are babies whose eyes are blessed by the Pew-Opener with all the prodigality of sudden admiration, the eyes, perhaps, being entirely hidden by the costly lace about them: "darling little angels," whose month or six weeks' noses alone are visible; "cherubs," who have nought in common with the cherubic nature, except, indeed, in their continual crying.

We have spoken of marriage and baptism; there is a third ceremony at which the Pew-Opener is called upon to assist, at which she is unfeignedly a grave, a serious actress:—we speak of *funerals*. Here she has nought to hope: people with bursting

hearts, and they who counterfeit sorrow, have no thoughts of fees; the Pew-Opener (save it be a public funeral, and the demand for seats is great) takes nothing from the hand of death: that is to her, cold, unprofitable indeed.

We thought to give the memoranda found among the papers of Abigail Spikenard, for two-and-thirty years Pew-Opener at the church of Saint ——. They have been sent to us with full permission to use them as we list; yet are holy and profane things jotted down so confusedly together (good Mrs. Spikenard could, no doubt, easily separate them), that we almost fear to set them as they are before the reader. However, Mrs. Spikenard, in her spirit of generalisation, saw nothing indecorous in her mode of making notes; and, therefore, hoping that the reader will take the Pew-Opener in the guilelessness of her meaning, we will venture to present him with a very few notes taken at random from her journal:—

“EPIPHANY.—Short sermon,—hard frost: sixpence from woman in red cloak.

“SEXAGESIMA.—The dear Bishop of Manna preached; moving discourse;—run off my legs;—full church;—seven shillings and sixpence,—bad half-crown;—suspect lady in blue velvet, yellow bonnet, and red poppy wreath.

“EASTER MONDAY.—Ten couple married; made only a pound: refused, out of spirit, from one two, a sixpence:—shall know the fellow if he ventures again. Oiled pew-locks.

“SHEPHEP SUNDAY.—Again, Bishop of Manna; long sermon, and rather hot. Lady fainted in crowd—a shilling. Saw person in blue velvet; mentioned bad half-crown: she wondered at my impudence! Where will she go to?

“Christening in afternoon: shabby parents, noisy brats; godmothers and godfathers shocking ignorant of what becomes ’em. Woman with twins only give as much as them with one. A poor day: early home to tea; left off muffins for the season.

“ROGATION.—New bishop—whitest hand ever saw. Crowded church; beautiful discourse again lusts of the flesh and vanities of the world. Lovely carriage of the bishop’s, and footmen fine and tall. Ladies sobbing; a sweet sermon: fifteen shillings. Do people come to church to pass off bad money?—another Brummagem sixpence!”

We will quote no further, for we fear there is, despite of the simplicity of Mrs. Spikenard, a certain irreverence in her style,—a neglect of the spiritual in her care for the worldly.

Oh, ye “pillars of unshaken orthodoxy!” ye, raised in station, educated for the ministry: ye who preach the gladness of glad tidings; ye in finest lawn, see that in your yearnings for the goods of earth, in your daily intercourse

with the ignorant laity, yea, even thundering in the pulpit, see, in heart and soul, ye sin no worse than the lowly, ignorant Pew-Opener.

We have read the discourse against the vanities of the world, as preached by the white-palmed bishop ; and we have read his three hours' speech made two nights before on the Beer Act. Verily, the two compositions did somewhat remind us of the memoranda of the worthy Mrs. Spikenard.

THE YOUNG LORD.

"WHEN a sow farrows," writes Henry Lord Brougham, in his "Dissertations," illustrative of Paley, "each pig"—by the action of the abdominal muscles, being literally thrown upon the world—"instantly runs up to one of the teats, which he ever after regards as his own peculiar property." So far, so well, with the first-born pigs; but his lordship continues:—"When more pigs than teats are produced, the latter ones run to the tail of some of the others, and suck till they die of inanition."*

Never before were the advantages and injuries of primogeniture more strikingly, and withal more affectingly, displayed. Who could have believed that a parallel was to be drawn between peers and pigs? And yet the Chinese, a philosophic, far-seeing people, must have had some inkling of the curious fact; for, in their harmonious and mysterious tongue, "the word '*shu*,'" says Dr. Mason Good, "means both a *lord* and a *swine*." It is, however, barely just to add, that this irreverence of synonym is purely the fault of the Chinese radicals; although, in the whole Celestial language, they "do not exceed four hundred and eleven."

The reader, after the authority we have cited, must admit that pigs are of two kinds: pigs born to teats, and pigs born to tails!

(Let us not be mistaken: far be it from us to mix together in an unseemly crowd sucking pigs with sucking peers. We hope to be understood as speaking philosophically, and not profanely.)

Young Lords, like young porkers, are of two kinds: lords born to teats, and lords born to tails. Here, however (and for the sake of our common humanity it is a great happiness to know it), the parallel ends. Lords, though the twentieth of the same house, do not die of inanition; for though aristocracy has but one teat, the state has many most nutritious tails. The first-born tugs all his life at the family breast: the younger Lords Charleses and Lords Augustuses have, time out of mind, been wet-nursed at the

* See "Dissertations on Subjects of Science," vol. i. p. 238.

public purse. When the inhuman mother has refused the bounty of a bosom, a Walpole has benignly given the fatness of a tail. The state, with Lady Macbeth, may cry,

“ —I have given suck, and know
How tender 'tis to love the lord that milks me ! ”

And the world has borne testimony to the plumpness of the nursling, to the fulness of its cheeks, the brawn of its thighs, and the loudness of its crying. History has shown the state to be a most kind wet nurse to deserted noble babes : so kind, that considering them in the maturity of their powers, it is sometimes difficult to decide who have been most fortunate,—the lords of the family teat, or the lords of the Exchequer tail.

However, we live in eventful times, in days of daring change, of most profane revolution. The Young Lord of the nineteenth century is a much less enviable person than the Young Lord of eighty years ago. If he be the first-born, with all the advantages of that happy state, the task set him by the hard and grudging spirit of the age is far more irksome, far more difficult, than that conned by his grandfather. His title as a title has not the weight it had ; it has lost, too, something of the music of its ring upon the leathern ears of a utilitarian generation. Hard times for Young Lords, when they may not leisurely saunter along the path of worldly honour, lest their heels be wounded by the advancing toes of the viler orders !

Time was when the lord exalted genius ; when the poet was a literary serf, and wore the collar of the nobleman. The bard of high fancies, noble aspirations, was protected by the rank of nobility, and the bay, it was thought, could only flourish near the strawberry leaves. The poet had succeeded the household jester, and was considered the especial property of the patron. His lordship's name was to be held a potent and wondrous idol in the dedication page of the bard, who was to kneel, and duck beneath, and to utter a strange jargon of idolatry and self-abasement. The poet was to clasp his hands in worship of the rewarding genius, and his lips, touched with Apollo's fire, were to kiss the dust from the shoe-leather of his literary life-giver. The sacrifices paid to the Ape with the Golden Tooth are harmless ceremonies to the offerings Genius rendered, within the last hundred years, to the patron-lord. Genius, however, no longer wears the livery of the nominally great, and the lord, the mere lord, has lost his hymning bondsman.

The Young Lord of the present time (we mean, the fortunate first-born), stripped as he is of many of the sweet prerogatives of a former age, has still a deal of good provided for him by the gods.

Though his title has not the same music, the like note of terror in its sound, that by turns delighted and awe-struck the vassals of other days, there are still broad lands, waving forests, inexhaustible mines, all in perspective his. Though he may have the ears of Midas, still he shall have his wealth; and if he may not, like his ancestors, hang, at his own sweet will, an offending serf at the hall-door, it is still a part of his birthright to make gins to catch the wicked. In this day, however, to be anything he must be something more than a lord; if not, his title is but a glittering extinguisher of the man.

Come we now to the younger brother—the Young Lord, still more hardly treated by the unjust prejudices of the present hard-dealing generation. He may, indeed, eschewing a stern, laborious ambition, that promises the reward of the student and the statesman, surrender himself to the blandishments of the race-course, and now-and-then give his system a fillip with the ancient, time-honoured sport of cock-fighting. If he be no longer by his station the exclusive patron of literature, he may take under his worshipful protection a wonderful rat-killing terrier:—still, there is something in his name that sheds lustre on a badger-bait, and gives no small importance to a hopping match. Small clubs still woo him as a grace and ornament, and very small men are, in their own esteem, made considerably bigger by his acquaintance. The lord, as a lord, is still a man of topping height amongst dwarfs; still an oracle to the witless and the dumb. He has been known, in the fulness of his condescension, to drive stage coaches; and, keeping up the drollery of the disguise, has touched his hat to the passengers, thankfully receiving half-crowns, shillings, and sixpences.

The Young Lord may, at times, with nothing else to dispose of—with neither talents for public trust, nor industry nor habits for private dealing—take his title to market, and with it turn a profitable penny. Eastward of Temple Bar there still are bidders. Although the prosaic spirit of the times has considerably affected the sale of Young Lords amongst the daughters of the counting-house, a title, even if it be not recommended by the most seductive manners, the handsomest figure, and the whitest teeth, finds purchasers in the oriental districts. Like Mrs. Peachem's coloured handkerchiefs, the Young Lord may go off at Redriff. He may take this credit to himself; that he has ennobled Barbara Wiggins, the youngest daughter of Ralph Wiggins, tallow-chandler; that he has introduced to the court, and to all the court's great glories, Miss Moidore, the heiress of old Moidore, money-lender and contractor.

Westward, the Young Lord is a dangerous person, to be espe-

cially watched by prudent mothers. He is, indeed, of the same family with his elder brother; has admittance to the self-same circle; is, probably, the handsomest of the stock; and, therefore, being a younger brother, a person to be more vigilantly considered. The Young Lord moves among fashionable heiresses to the liveliest distress of their disinterested natural guardians. His station gives him every opportunity of rendering himself the most delightful of men to the susceptible young, whilst the poverty of his fortunes makes him detestable to the reflecting old. His very look has in it an invitation to elope; he cannot whisper that he does not put the fatal question. These are the fears of the lynx-eyed mother, who very properly descants on the profligacy of the younger brother, of his habits of play, his debts, his horrible *liaisons*, his wickedness in general; forgetting not to cast all his faults into deeper shadow by contrasting them with the manifold virtues and very many gentlemanly qualities possessed by his dear, his excellent relation, the family heir.

There is, however, an easy road to distinction for the Young Lord: he has still within his reach the means of notoriety, with the further gratification of proving to the scoffing vulgar that he is, even in these days, privileged in his enjoyments; that his ebullitions of a warm temperament are more considerably judged than the vagaries of common folks; and that, when called to account for his buoyant eccentricity, he is "used all gently," and, on the part of his censors, with due allowance for his social standing. The Young Lord despoils many doors of their knockers, and there is a whim, a novelty in the achievement which makes it "light to Cassio." He breaks a few lamps, and is fined forty shillings; he pays the money with the fortitude of a martyr, and, with a smile, asks his judge if that is all the damage. The judge nods assent; forty shillings from the purse of our Young Lord being, in the punishment inflicted upon him by such a mulct, equal to two months imprisonment to a poorer wag with the trifling supplement of hard labour. Thus it is; unless a man have a Young Lord for his acquaintance, and can use a crowbar or fling a stone under the patronage of the aristocracy, he must pay most disproportionately for the recreation. This is obviously wrong, and, in our humble opinion, quite in opposition to the meaning of the excellent King John when, one fine day, he signed and sealed at Runnymede.

The Young Lord is sometimes the centre of an admiring circle; the patron of a knot of eccentric spirits, living on the hem of *society*, who are yet convinced that the light of the fashionable world is reflected upon them from the countenance of their noble

"friend." Under his auspices, in his name, they assemble at a pothouse which, dignified by such a gathering, becomes a tavern : and with true devotion, eat and drink their fealty to the Lord of Broken Panes. He sets the fashion of commonplace debauchery, and has a thousand followers : clerks, shopmen, and apprentices in humble imitation of their great original model,

" Break the lamps, beat watchmen,
Then stagger to some punk."

The Young Lord, by his own sufferings, makes a watchhouse a place of sport for humbler revellers ; and fined for being drunk, by the chivalrous air with which he flings down five shillings, recommends intoxication as the best of all possible frailties to his worshipful admirers. To beard a magistrate is to show fine blood ; to damn the newspapers, and all their daily histories, high moral valour. Thus the Young Lord has still some influence on social life—still makes his impress on a plastic generation.

We live, however, in times unpropitious to the successful development of romance. Every day the distance between the noble brawler and the plebeian blackguard is lessened, and we know not how soon the Young Lord may, in public opinion, toe the same line with the young cobbler ; that is, when both engaged in the same midnight mirth, when both animated by the same dignified purpose. This is a hard truth for the *Pullus Jovis* of the nineteenth century, who may accuse his stars that he fell not on a more feudal age ; that, coming late into this revolutionary world, he must even submit to an ordeal unknown to his grandfathers. But so it is. Public opinion is the terrible Inquisition of modern times ; and those who, in a former age, were by their birth and office held the elect and chosen, are unceremoniously dragged forth, questioned, and doomed to an *auto da fé*. We have fallen upon bitter days.

It is next to be considered (policy, humanity presses upon us the necessity of grave cogitation,) what is to be done with Young Lords ; with those who in a happier time would have been born not to their fathers and mothers, but to the people ; with those who, deprived of a teat at home, would have been put out to wet-nurse on the nation. There was a time when the public treasury had many tails ; but alas ! alas ! murderous innovation, with a heart of flint, has cut them off one by one, and already are others marked and doomed for excision.

What shall become of the younger branches of the aristocracy, since they may no longer, to any number, be planted in the garden of the Hesperides, laid out and tended at the public cost ?

The Young Lord (be it still remembered, that we speak of

second sons, and so downwards) looks around him in this hard, grudging nineteenth century ; surveys every yard of once merry England, and, to him, yearning for the sweet fruits of former days, finds the land barren.

The Young Lord peeps into the church. Alas ! though a few good stalls still remain, the struggle to get into one of them is made fierce by many candidates. And then, the sweet green nooks, the rich pastures, the many pleasant places, consecrated for an age to the uses of the sons of orthodoxy, are, in a measure, thrown open, impoverished, made desolate, compared to the exclusiveness and plenty of the good old religious times. There are still, it must be confessed, many delicious corners, a thousand savoury morsels for the occupancy and palates of the sons of the church ; but alack ! the crowd elbowing for the worldly paradise,—the host, with open mouths, gaping for the food ! The Young Lord can no longer lounge into the very *penetralia* of the costly edifice ; its manna is not to be had for the mere gathering ; he is hustled by a mob of lords as good as he ; and hands as white and gentle as his own, claw and scramble for the blessed aliment.

The Young Lord would try his fortunes on the deep. Again, the spirit of the times levels him almost to the common. There was a day when epaulettes were to be had for votes ; and the “aye” of the papa would bring down decorative honour on the shoulder of the son ; when grey heads were common among plebeian midshipmen ; as common as downy chins among lieutenants and commanders ; when, lucky was the child whose father was one of twenty freeholders, for his merits, made known to the minister, would be exalted. Such days are dead and gone : the Young Lord looks into the gun-room and the cock-pit, and in those chosen spots, where, in former times, one Young Lord sufficed to shed a grace and dignity—there are lords by the half-dozen. Unless more ships are built for Young Lords, they must even tarry in the shade ; must be still commanded, when they would fain command.

The Young Lord, disappointed in the church, disgusted with the fleet, looks towards the army. Peace, however, inglorious peace, throngs the service with gentle spirits of his order ; he sees a crowd of lords, and, so long has the sword slumbered in the scabbard, not a sprig of laurel amongst the multitude.

The Young Lord turns his looks towards Westminster. He will practise the law. He looks into the courts ; what clouds of wigs ! How many hands yet innocent of briefs ! Yea, every seat is filled with candidates for fees, and there is no abiding-place for the Young Lord.

What, then, is to become of our young, our most interesting

subject? Are all the avenues to fame and profit closed against him; or, at least, are they so beset by suitors that it is to lose all distinction to mingle among them? What, then, is left for our Young Lord?

The reader is to be admonished that we would present society in its inevitable advancement. We do not picture the present Young Lord in this utter state of destitution; we do not assert this to be his case in 1839, but assuredly as his certain perplexing condition as the world wears on; as abuses, that is, privileges hitherto assured to him are amended, swept away by the spirit of the times. "Young ravens must be fed." Young Lords must be nourished; and when all the thousand tails whereupon Young Lords exist are cut off by the fell shears of utility, either they must displace their brethren, the happy first-born enjoying all the milk of primogeniture from their feeding-places, insisting on an equal share of goods, or they must descend a step in the social scale, and ruffle it with the vulgar.

But the Young Lord will not so condescend. He has still the pride of birth—of ancestry; is still linked with the representative of his family; still has reflected upon him the cold lustre of his line. What, then, is to be the condition of the younger sons of pride and rank? What, in the social revolution, silently but steadily approaching,—what course is left to them? We see hope—yes, we descry land.

New Zealand—world of promise and of beauty!—rises upon the destitute. The Young Lord has still an outlet from crowded England—from the multitude amidst whom he is undistinguished, to a land where he may wax great and strong by the exercise of those very energies which he may not, from pride and prejudice, put forth at home. The position we have taken may, to the unreflecting—to those who see in the social state of the present day the type of that to come—appear Utopian, foolish; insulting to the illustrious persons to whom the argument applies. And yet the very progress of things indicates the issue. Saint Giles has sent forth his emigrants, and, in due season, so will Saint James.

The ship may not yet be built; nay, the acorns from which the timbers shall be grown, not yet in the earth; but the prophet sees her dropping down the Thames, and sees aboard her freight of younger sons.

— "The vanes sit steady
Upon the abbey towers. The silver lightnings
Of the evening star, spite of the city's smoke,
Tell that the north-wind reigns in upper air.
Mark, too, that flock of fleecy-winged clouds,
Sailing athwart St. Margaret's!"

In the meantime, the Young Lord is the nursling of fortune. What knows he of the wants, the strugglings, the sympathies of life? It is ten to one that almost the whole purpose of his education is to render him indifferent to the great interests of humanity, inculcating within him an easy selfishness that reduces the whole world to his immediate circle; that makes him look upon all without that magic ring as nought. At college he takes honours as a matter of course, whilst the plebeian labours for them. Even in academic groves, he becomes fortified in those prejudices which separate him from the great mass of his fellow-men. Whilst ostensibly giving ear to "divine philosophy," he is the frequent scholar of riot and misrule. Bigotry finds him her aptest pupil; a ready soldier for her hoary rights; the panting follower of her low behests. In her cause he can wield a cudgel, and out-bellow Stentor: for her beloved sake he blows a cat-call, and knocks down his man. Do you doubt this, reader? To Oxford, then, or Cambridge: go, and be converted.

The Young Lord of our day has, it must be owned, changed from his predecessor of fifty years ago. He is not the same hero of fortune, who, with impunity, might cane his footman, and kick his creditor. He is, by public opinion, put upon his good behaviour; and so, generally conforms to all the decencies. There are, to be sure, exceptions; but we will not dwell upon them. There was a time when the Young Lord could take shelter from personal insignificance in his title; the nobleman could, as Sheridan has expressed it, "hide his head in a coronet;" now it affords no concealment; but, on the contrary, is a mark, drawing the thoughts of men to test the value of the possessor.

The Young Lord must march with the times, or must be content to be left behind with the stragglers. This is the more incumbent on him as the old resources of his predecessors become every day less; more urgent, when every day serves to show the different destinies of lords who, like Brougham's pigs, are—lords born to teats, and lords born to tails.

THE UNDERTAKER.

No man (that is, no tradesman) has a more exquisite notion of the outward proprieties of life, of all its external decencies, luxuries, and holiday show-making, than your Undertaker. With him, death is not death; but, on the contrary, a something to be handsomely appointed and provided for; to be approached with the deference paid by the trader to the buyer, and treated with an attention, a courtesy, commensurate with the probability of profit. To the Undertaker, death is not a ghastly, noisome thing; a hideous object to be thrust into the earth; the companion of corruption; the fellow of the worm: not it! Death comes to the Undertaker, especially if he bury in high life, a melancholy coxcomb, curious in the web of his winding-sheet, in the softness of his last pillow, in the crimson or violet velvet that shall cover his oaken couch, and in more than all, particular in the silver gilt nails, the plates, and handles, that shall decorate it. A sense of profit in the Undertaker wholly neutralises the terrible properties of death; for, to him, what is another corpse but another customer?

"Of course, sir," says Mandrake, taking orders for a funeral,—
"Of course, sir, you'll have feathers?"

"Indeed, I—I see no use in feathers," replies the bereaved party, whose means are scarcely sufficient for the daily necessities of the living; "no use at all."

"No feathers, sir!" says Mandrake, with a look of pitying wonder. "Why, excuse me, sir, but—really—you would bury a servant without feathers."

"Well, if you think them necessary,"—

"Necessary! No respectable person can be buried without feathers," says Mandrake; and (wise dealer!) he touches the chord of worldly pride, and feathers make part of the solemnity. "Then, sir, for mutes: you have mutes, doubtless?"

"I never could understand what service they were," is the answer.

"Oh, dear sir!" cries Mandrake; "not understand! Consider

the look of the thing! You would bury a pauper, sir, without mutes."

"I merely want a plain, respectable funeral, Mr. Mandrake."

"Very true, sir; therefore, you must have mutes. What is the expense, sir? Nothing, in comparison with the look of the thing."

"I always thought it worse than useless to lavish money upon the dead; so, everything very plain, Mr. Mandrake."

"I shall take care, sir; depend upon me, sir: everything shall be of the most comfortable kind, sir. And now, sir, for the choice of ground;" and hereupon, Mr. Mandrake lays upon the table a plan of the churchyard, probably divided into three separate parts for the accommodation of the different ranks of the dead. "Now, sir, for the ground."

"Is there any choice?"

"Decidedly, sir. This is what we call the first ground; a charming, dry, gravelly soil: you may go any depth in it, sir,—any depth, sir: dry, sir, dry as your bed. This is the second ground; a little damper than the first, certainly: but still, some respectable persons do bury there." On this, Mr. Mandrake folds up the plan.

"Well, but the third ground. That is, I suppose, the cheapest?"

"Clay, sir; clay. Very damp, indeed;—you wouldn't like it—in winter extremely wet."

"Still, if the price be much lower than either of the others,"—

"Very true, sir; it is, and properly so; or how would the very poor people be able to bury at all? You may, of course, sir, do as you please; but nearly all respectable families bury in the first ground. If it were my own case, I should say the first ground—such gravel, sir!"

"Well, I suppose it must be so."

"You wouldn't like any other; depend upon it, sir, you wouldn't. The first ground, then, sir;" and Mr. Mandrake departs, self-satisfied that, for the look of the thing—for merely the sake of his customer's respectability—he has induced him to order feathers, mutes, and the first ground.

And in all this dealing what part of it has death? Alack! the feathers are not borne before his cold, white face; the mutes march not with solemn step to do him reverence: the fine, dry, gravelly bed is not for the ease of death's pithless bones; they would rest as well in the third ground as the first. No; the trappings of the defunct are but the outward dressings of the pride of the living: the Undertaker, in all his melancholy pomp, his dingy bravery, waits upon the quick, and not the dead. It is the living *who crave for plumes, for nails, double gilt; for all the outward*

show of wealth and finery. Pride takes death, and, for its especial purpose, tricks it out in the frippery of life. "Man," says Sir Thomas Browne, "is a noble animal, splendid in ashes, and pompous in the grave; solemnising nativities and deaths with equal lustre; nor omitting ceremonies of bravery in the infamy of his nature." Hence the Undertaker.

Let us, however, follow Mr. Mandrake through his daily solemnity. Let us attend him to the house of mourning; let us go with him on the day when he who was the very heart of that house is to be carried forth to the churchyard. For a time, the Undertaker takes possession of the miserable homestead. He is the self-created lord of its hospitality. It is he who stands the master of the mansion, and does its melancholy honours. With what grim urbanity he hands about the cake and wine! How he presses refreshment upon the heart-broken; how, as merely a matter of business, he proffers it to the mourners by invitation! His words, few and significant, come in whispers, and he treads the carpet as though he walked on flowers. Nor are his attentions confined to the relatives and friends of the dead: no, he has a keen anxiety for the wants of his vassals. The mutes, two breathing, half-crown images of deepest woe at the door, must, to support their load of sorrow, be plied with cake and alcohol; the coachmen cannot look sufficiently serious without their customary fluid; and the bearers, that they may stand manfully beneath their burthen, must nerve their hearts with potent gin.

The funeral is over, the cloaks are gathered up, the bathbands adjusted, the Undertaker and his servants have departed, and nought remains of the solemnity save—the bill! That is, in due time, presented; and—happy is the Undertaker above all the race of trading men—his commodities, as provided and supplied, defy the voice of cavil. His articles, six, eight, ten feet below the earth, are not to be questioned. He boldly charges for the "best mattress and pillow;" for the grass has begun to grow above them, or the mason has built them over, and who shall doubt their quality? The "best mattress!" What a melancholy satire in the superlative, when we think of the head of clay, the limbs of earth disposed upon it! And then, "To a stout, handsome elm coffin;" its durability and beauty insisted upon with a flourish, as if it were a thing made and adorned to endure for ever; a precious chest provided for the Judgment. Then follows, "To the use of the best black silk velvet pall," and the "feathers," and the "cloaks," and the "hearse," and the "coaches," and all that may be truly said to belong to the living; the mattress, the shroud, and the "handsome elm," being, indeed,

the only things that can be honestly charged to the account of the dead.

But we are speaking of the funerals of the rich, or, at least, of those to whom death is not made more ghastly, more bitter, more agonising, by poverty. Such shows are made impressive by the worldly cunning of the dealer in coffins. How black, and fat, and shining, the horses! how richly caparisoned! what fine heavy, massive plumes! How the hearse nods from its roof! What an army of pages! And then, after the twenty mourning coaches, what a line of private carriages, sent by their owners as representatives of their love and respect to the departed. All this makes a touching sight; we are profoundly moved by this union of earth's wealth and earth's nothingness; this meeting of human glory and human meanness; this shaking hands of stark corruption and high-crested pride. Yes; there is in the sight food for meditation; serious matter suggestive of solemn thoughts; and yet, what are these brave shows of death to the miserable, squalid obsequies of the poor?

It is the Sabbath in London. Streams of people pour along the streets; everybody wears a brightened face; the whole metropolis makes cheerful holiday. All things move, and look, and sound of life, and life's activities. Careless talk and youthful laughter are heard as we pass: man seems immortal in his very ease. Creeping through the throng, comes the poor man's funeral train: look at the Undertaker marshalling the way. Is he the same functionary who handed cake and wine—who deferentially assisted at the fitting of the mourning gloves—who tried on the cloak; or, who noiselessly entered the room, and, ere the screws were turned, with a face set for the occasion, and a voice pitched to the sadness of his purpose, begged to know if "it was the wish,—before—before—" and then shrunk aside, as some one or two rushed in agony of heart to take a farewell look? Is it the same Undertaker—is it even a bird of the same sable feather? Hardly; for see how he lounges along the path: his head is cast aside, and there is in every feature the spirit of calculation. What is he thinking of,—the train he leads?—the part he plays in the festival of death? No: he is thinking of his deals at home—of the three other burials his men are attending for him—of his chances of payment—of the people who have passed their word in security for part of the money for the present funeral—of the lateness of the hour—of his tea, that will be waiting for him ere the burying be done. How sad, how miserable the train that follows! The widow and her children: what *efforts* have been made—what future privations entailed, by the *purchase* of the mourning that covers them! Here is death in

all his naked horror ; with nought to mask his unsightliness—nothing to lessen the blow ; here, indeed, he rends the heart-strings, and there is no medicine in fortune, no anodyne to heal the wounds. Follow the mourners from the church-yard home. Home !—A place of desolation ; a cold hearth, and an empty cupboard. It is in the poor man's house that the dart of death is sharpest—that terror is added to the king of terrors. It is there that he sets up his saddest scutcheon in the haggard looks of the widow—in the pallid faces of the fatherless.

There is another funeral in which the Undertaker performs a double office. How often do we see him sauntering dreamily along, bearing on his shoulder the "baby bud"—the youngling that seemed born only to die. Noisy, laughing children play before and about him, as the Undertaker steadily pursues his way ; the itinerant tradesman shouts at his ear, and all the noise, the stir, and bustle of unceremonious, working-day life, goes on around him, as, followed by the heart-broken mother, and some solitary friend, he carries to churchyard earth—what ?—the last covering of an immortal spirit—the fleshly garment of one of God's angels.

The pauper's funeral has its Undertaker : an easy, careless, unpretending person ; for at such a ceremonial, there is no need of even professional gravity. Rough, parish deals, put in no equal claim with "fine elm, covered with superfine black cloth ;" the rag that swathes the beggar has not the "magic in its web" woven in the shrouds of corpses of respectability. No man puts on mourning for the pauper, nor should he. For, at his grave, humanity should rejoice—should feel a solemn gladness. Poor wretch ! at length he has tricked the trickster, Fortune : he has shuffled off his worldly squalor, that, like a leprosy, parted him from healthy men ; he is no longer the despised tatterdemalion—the outcast, the offal of the human kind. He has taken high promotion : he has escaped from the prison of this world, and is in the illimitable country of the dead. There he has rare companionship : he is with Solomon and Paul—with "the man of Uz"—with Lazarus and Saint John ! He, who, a week since, was a workhouse drudge, is now equal with any of the line of Pharaoh ! Thus thinking, the rough-hewn deals of the pauper become rich as the cedar coffins of the royal dead : the beggar rots in his rags, yet shares he the self-same fate as spice-embalmed kings.

The Undertaker is sometimes called upon to make up by one great show — by the single pageant of an hour — for the neglect and misery shown and inflicted for years by the living to the dead. How many a poor relation has pined and died in a garret, disregarded by wealthy kindred, who profusely lavish upon clay

what they denied to beating flesh and blood. How many a worthy soul, doomed, by the apathy of relatives, to a thread-bare coat, has his coffin covered with superfine black cloth, at their most special request ? He, who has been made prisoner to his wretched hearth by his napless hat, shall have plumes borne before him to his grave ; and he, the penniless, who yearned for out-door air, yet had no limbs to bear him across the threshold, shall be carried in a hearse and four to his grave, with mourning coaches to follow. When death strikes the neglected relative — the poor man of worth and genius, — kindred and admirers send in the Undertaker to make amends for past coldness. Some of the money might have been better laid out with the vendors of creature-comforts ; but no matter, let there be no stint of expense to the man who deals in hoods and scarfs, and the loan of the best pall. A few pounds might have soothed the last hours of the departed, stung, it may be, into death by the threats of creditors ; the gentle process of the law.—That, however, is not to be thought of ; there is now no fear of a prison for the defunct, so, Mr. Undertaker, be sure that his coffin is of the very best and stoutest elm.

“ And bailiffs may seize his last blanket to-day,
Whose pall shall be held up by nobles to-morrow.”

The Undertaker comes in at the last to hush up all former indifference, all past neglect, to make all things even with a splendid funeral, and to bury the deceased, and the memory of his wrongs, handsomely together. Then comes the hypocrisy of the mourning, the outward sign of the inward heartbreaking, made manifest by many flounces, for one, if acknowledged at all, acknowledged as a family annoyance, whilst upon earth, though deeply regretted in many yards of crape and bombasin since he has been laid under it.

The Undertaker is now and then required to make due reparation to the self-wronged. When the muckworm who has starved his bowels, and kept bare his back, that he might die worth some darling amount, is called from the world he knew not how to enjoy, it is pleasant to see the Undertaker lavish on the carcase of the miser all the sombre glories of his craft. We feel a kind of satisfaction at the expensive revenge taken upon his clay for all its former penury ; we chuckle at the costliness with which the dead hunks is dished up for the worms ; we acknowledge in the lengthy bill of the Undertaker a proper and piquant retribution on the money-clutching deceased. A few weeks ago was buried *Mr. Skinpenny* : he died worth half a million. A fortnight only before he was shovelled into the earth, he pathetically

remonstrated with his profligate son on his reckless mode of poking the fire. No money could stand such an outlay for fuel.

"Well, but father," said the spendthrift, "the weather is extremely cold, and what am I to do?"

"Do, sir!" exclaimed the thrifty sire; "look here, sir, see what I do—see what I endure to save fourpence." On which Mr. Skinpenny twitched the wristband of his shirt from below his cuff, and showed that the garment had been vigilantly guarded from the hands of the laundress for many a week. The pleasant part remains to be told: the funeral of Skinpenny cost exactly one hundred pounds. We have only to add a wish, that, as his ghost seated itself in the boat of Charon, and after due chaffering paid its fare, the eternal waterman, ere he landed the thin shade, clapt into its hand the bill of Deathshead, Crossbones, and Company, for the burial of its flesh. To be doomed to read such a bill, and nothing but the bill, for a handful of ages, would, we conceive, be a very proper purgatory for the soul of a miser, who, shivering in rags whilst he lived, had been buried in fine linen and superfine black when a carcase.

There are some men, who, passing for dullards all their life, have had a joke at their funerals; they have, in anticipation, enjoyed their posthumous wit, and been content to live upon the humour of the future. It is only a short time since that we read of the funeral of an Italian wag, who gave it in strict charge, that certain torches, made under his own inspection, and carefully preserved for the ceremony, should be used in his funeral procession. The man died, the torches were lighted, the procession, composed of the sorrowing and the grave, was formed, and proceeded to the tomb. At a certain time, the torches having burned down to the combustibles, squibs, crackers, and other holiday fireworks, exploded from the funeral lights, to the fear and astonishment of the people. How often had the deceased, at the time a clod of clay, laughed and hugged himself at the explosion! How many times had he, in fact, enjoyed his own funeral! However, he must have died in good odour with the Church, or else, how easy for her cowed and bare-footed sons to have found in the squibs and crackers, a supernatural manifestation of the whereabouts of the soul of the departed.

The Emperor Maximilian I. took, as we conceive, very unnecessary pains to show, when dead, the nothingness of human nature. He ordered his hair to be cut off, and his teeth to be ground to powder, and publicly burnt. He also ordered that his body, after due exposure, should be put into a sack of quicklime, covered with taffeta and white damask, laid in a coffin, and buried under the altar of St. George, in the church of the palace

of Neustadt; the head and heart of the Emperor being so situated that the officiating priest should tread upon them. This is the very trick of bigotry: the tyrant, during his life, walks over living heads and hearts, and thinks he makes all quit with heaven if he give his dust to be trod upon by Mother Church.

As we have dealt with melancholy,—have written in the shade through several pages, we will wind up with a piece of humour which, were it generally followed, would, at least, have this good:—it would make needless funereal hypocrisy, and render burials ingenuous and truthful ceremonies. We quote from the "*Choix des Testamens, Anciens et Modernes*," this, the most wise and hearty last will of one Louis Cortusio, a doctor of Padua, dated 1418.

The testator forbids his friends to weep at his funeral on pain of being disinherited; and, on the contrary, appoints him who shall laugh the loudest his principal heir and universal legatee. Not a piece of black is to be seen in his house or in the church when he is to be buried; but both are to be strewn with flowers and green boughs on the day of his funeral. There is to be no tolling of bells; but his corpse is to be carried to church accompanied by fifty minstrels sounding their lutes, violins, flutes, haut-boys, and trumpets; and "Hallelujah" is to be sung as at after Easter. The bier, covered with a shirt of different sparkling colours, is to be carried by twelve marriageable girls, clothed in green, and singing lively airs, to whom the testator leaves a dowry. Instead of torches, green boughs are to be carried by boys and girls wearing coronets of flowers, and singing in chorus. The clergy, with the monks and nuns (at least, those orders who do not wear black), to follow in procession. We have only to add (and we write it to the honour of the judicial powers of Padua), that the orders of the defunct were carried into effect. May the earth rest lightly on thee, Louis Cortusio!

We have but one quaint anecdote of an Undertaker: being, however, something in a kindred spirit to the humour of the doctor of Padua, it must be given. The Undertaker lost his wife. "I wear black," quoth he, "for strangers; how shall I show my mourning for the partner of my bosom?" A lucky thought fell upon the man of sables: he changed his garments of black for raiment of snowy white. From hat to shoes was the Undertaker clothed in candid array. We have heard of crows as white as whitest swans: can they be crows that have lost their mates?

THE POSTMAN.

HERALD of joy—messenger of evil ! Daily terror—hourly hope ! Now, one deputed from the gods ; and now, the envoy of pain, and poverty, and death. Each and all of these is the unconscious Postman. In the round of one morning he may stand at fifty thresholds, the welcome bringer of blessed news, the long-hoped, long-prayed for carrier of good tidings, and the dismal tale-bearer, the ambassador of woe. The Postman deals his short, imperative knock, and the sound shall, like a fairy spell, as quickly call a face of hopeful gladness to the door : he passes to the next house, and his summons makes the anxious soul within quail and quake with apprehension. He is, indeed, a stout, a happy man, whose heart has never shrunk at the knock of the Postman.

We meet the Postman in his early walk : he is a familiar object, a social common-place, tramping through mud, and snow, and drenching rain, and withering cold, the drudge of all weathers ; and we scarcely heed the value of his toil,—rarely consider the daily treasure of which he is the depository and the dealer forth. We speak of treasure in its highest meaning ; eschewing all notice of bank notes, and bills, and cheques, where-with the Postman is daily trusted : we confine ourselves to the more precious records of the heart ; to the written communings of affection ; the kind remembrances ; the yearnings of the absent ; the hopes of the happy ; and the more sacred sorrows of the unfortunate. Look at that little bundle of letters grasped by the Postman. Who shall guess the histories that are there !—histories more deep, more touching, than many on the shelves of libraries ; writing, albeit the authorship of the poor and ignorant, that in its homely truth shall shame the laboured periods of fashionable quill-cutters. Sally Robins writes home to say, that John Thomson is a very proper young man ; and that, if father and mother have no objection, she thinks she can persuade herself to become Mrs. Thomson. Give us that letter

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for a piece of wholesome nature, a bit of simple feeling, before any set of three volumes by Lady Pickansteal, even with the illustration of her ladyship's portrait, *built* by Parris, with the hat, weeping willow, feather, bouquet, velvet and all to match. The Postman is the true publisher: his tales are verities; his romances, things of life: besides, in his case, though penned by right honourable ladies and gentlemen, the wares he deals in are delivered without any improvement by foreign hands to their readers. Thus considered, the Postman's diurnal budget is the history of much of human life; the written pictures of its hopes, wants, follies, virtues, crimes; of its pettiest and most fleeting ceremonies, as of its highest and most enduring aspirations.

The Postman's packet is before us. In what close companionship are the lowly and the great! Here is a letter to his Grace, and over it a missive from Molly the scullion: look we immediately behind the duke, and we find the epistle of Dicky the groom. Try lower down: what have we here? The humble petition of an old constituent to a place-giving politician, backed by a letter from Epsom, penned by a professor of the thimble rig! What next? Alack, the profanation! Behind the pea-and-thimble varlet, lies the pastoral note of the meek Bishop of Orangeton to a minister of state. In the rear of the bishop—oh, for a pound of civet!—lurks the agonising correspondence of a heart-stricken opera dancer. Here is a position—here a jumble! Oh, for a peep at the contents of only two of the last three letters! That it should be felony to break a seal, and in spite of such provocation! Otherwise, what various views of life might we not enjoy from them? How beautifully should we find the trickery of the trading gambler relieved by the gentleness, virtues, and political piety of the senatorial bishop! True it is, that we have a sort of half-reverence for the professor of the pea-and-thimble, on account of the remoteness of his origin. It is not generally known (except perhaps, to losers,) that the pea-and-thimble man comes from the country of the crocodile, being, as proved by the learned Mr. Lane, descended from the sons of ancient Egypt. Nevertheless, their several letters opened, we know, we feel, that we should turn with disgust from the sharper of the race-course, to melt and glow with admiration at party episcopacy—at the lordly shepherd smelling of the imperial parliament.

But we have not time to go through all our Postman's bundle; we must not dwell among the lovers, lawyers, contrabandists, merchants, gossips, philosophers (for there shall, in so thick a budget, be one or two of such rare fowl), hucksters, sharpers, moralists, quacks and dupes, peaceably bound together by the *Postman's string*, and each and all waiting serenely for their

delivery. Looked upon as the emanations, the representatives of their separate writers, what a variety of purpose, what many-coloured means, and nearly all to arrive at the same common end ! Could we have more curious reading, than by taking letter by letter, and so going through the whole Babel of contents ? To light now upon the doating ravings of an absent swain, and now upon the peremptoriness of a vigilant attorney ! Eternal love, and instant payment ! Dim visions of Hymen and the turnkey ; the wedding ring and the prison bolt ! Next, to come upon the sinful secrets of the quiet, excellent, respectable man ; the worthy soul, ever virtuous because never found out : to unearth the hypocrite from folded paper, and see all his iniquity blackening in a white sheet ! And then to fall upon a piece of simple goodness ; a letter gushing from the heart : a beautiful, unstudied vindication of the worth and untiring sweetness of human nature ; a record of the invulnerability of man, armed with high purpose, sanctified by truth : a writing that, in the recollection that it leaves, shall be an amulet against the sickness of uncharitable thoughts, when judging man at his worst, remembering still the good of which he is capable. Yes, a most strange volume of real life is the daily packet of the Postman !

The letter-carrier himself may be said to be deficient of any very striking characteristic, any peculiar recommendation as a national portrait ; in himself he is, indeed, a common-place ; he is only for the time being elevated by our hopes and fears ; only for the nonce the creature of our associations. We suffer the fever of anxiety for a letter, and the approaching Postman comes upon us a very different person from him who passed our window a week ago. In the intensity of our expectation, we almost make him a party to our gladness or our suffering : he has nothing for us, and inwardly we almost chide him for the disappointment ; he seems leagued against us, and in our thoughts we reproach him for his unkindness. "Are you sure you have nothing ?" we ask, as if almost petitioning his will to delight us ; for a time, we seem to ourselves dependent upon his courtesy alone for a satisfying answer. We have a little story in illustration of the naturalness of this :—

A late friend of ours had long expected a letter—it came not. Day after day, his handmaiden had seen the Postman pass the door. At length, the knock was heard—that heart-awakening sound, when so desired—the Postman's knock ! Betty flew to the door, and as she took the letter, with vehement reproach addressed the unoffending carrier :—"You ought to be ashamed of yourself," said Betty ; "you know you ought—a good-for-nothing fellow !" "What's the matter ?" asked the Postman,

speaking through the silver in his mouth, and with his right hand dipping for change. "What's the matter, my dear?" "Don't dear me! You know you ought to be ashamed of yourself," was the ancillary reply. "Why, what have I done?" urged the Postman. "Done!" echoed the maid, who then immediately crushed the culprit with a revelation of his iniquity; "here have you brought this letter, and only this morning!" "Well?" "Well, indeed! and my poor dear master expected it three weeks ago." Betty felt assured that the delay rested with the Postman; that he alone was chargeable with the disappointment. Wiser folks than Betty have been tempted to do the letter-carrier a like passing wrong.

We have said the Postman was with us a common-place; and yet, in the very regularity of his calls may we see the highest triumphs of civilisation. How he keeps man knit to man; what interest he upholds; how he connects, and makes voluble, absent hearts; how, through him all the corners of the earth hold discourse with one another! The Postman with us is a daily fate: nought stops him; he walks, and walks, and for ever walks, knocking and dealing forth his many missives, in fair weather and in tempest, in scorching sun and nipping frost. In the remote habitations of man, the Postman is, indeed, invested with more romantic attributes; he is not a dweller among the people, but a fitful and uncertain visitor. The letter-carrier to the few denizens of a Canadian forest, is of far higher mark than the Postman in Cheapside. He who brings news to the wilderness, comes a more eventful courier than he who delivers tidings from the log huts to men in towns. *They* are living in the hurly of life; to them there can come at best but quiet news; tidings of hewing and clearing; of corn sown, sows farrowed, and poultry hatched. To the exile in the woods, the letter-carrier brings with the news of cities, old recollections touching to dwell upon, thoughts of old habits not yet quite flung off, memories of old and early friends, with all the noise, and stir, and goodly glittering show, that once made up a hopeful existence—was once the day-dream of the reader's life. We can see such a man, can behold the emigrant in the very heart of the wilderness, leaning against a tree. The pines felled about him bear witness to his sinewy arm, and yet his hand shakes as with palsy at an opened sheet of paper. In the depth of the forest; in its solemn silence, only broken by the leap of the squirrel or the cry of the jay; in a solitude and stillness so profound and so still that there a man might hear his own heart beat;—the emigrant, gazing on the *letter*, sees amidst his tears the houses of England, her old *remembered streets*, a hundred well-known faces, and hears long

since forgotten, old familiar sounds. Is this a fancy-picture, reader? Never believe it; for men of self-deemed granite, cut off from men, find, to their own astonishment, that they still are tearful flesh. We must, however, turn from all picturesque couriers; from the letter-carrier through swamps and woods; the Arab, dromedary-mounted; and the Tartar on his arrowy steed,—to return to the wayfarer of British streets, the English Postman.

Though his calling be, in truth, of the humblest sort, we do not look upon it as altogether menial. The cause of this is probably to be found in the various feelings of hope and fear which it is his function at times to awaken in us. Though, indeed, nothing more than a light porter, still, the precious things revealed to us by the little packets he is charged with for us, endow him with a consequence independent of his mere employment. He is, we know, with his masters a man of trust; but he is something more to us: he is so mingled with our happy and fearful expectations, that we wholly forget the money-letters every day entrusted to him, in our thoughts of the missives beyond all purchase which he sometimes brings us. If we may here say a word for the Twopenny Postman, we will denounce his livery: it is more a badge of mere servitude, than a uniform denoting office. We would have him a thought more gallantly appointed, or at once relieve him of the scurvy cuffs and collar with which, in either the bad taste or the worse economy of the Post Office, he is now branded. The suit of scarlet, we know, befits a Postman; there is an importance, a blazonry in it, in proper harmony with the bringer of news. This is as we would have it; nor are we certain that we should object to the assumption, on the part of the General, of a more noticeable beaver—say, a beaver of three angles, gold-lace bound. As it is, however, the General is outwardly a man of mark; his coming is to be seen afar off: but for the Twopenny, he may pass obscurely in a crowd; or, if he carry no distinguishing bundle of letters, be irreverently mistaken for the vassal of a suburban apothecary,—yearning for a footman, coquetting with a livery. Perish such invidious distinctions between Generals and Twopennies!

Postmen (we speak particularly of Twopenny) are happy in their vocation: it secures them against all the manifold ills of a sedentary life; and their minds, continually engaged in the light, though sometimes difficult, reading of superscriptions, must necessarily be at once enlarged and strengthened by the practice. Cobblers and tailors are said to be addicted to politics, and, consequently treason: this disposition has, by some philosophers, been traced to the in-door habits of the craftsmen, to their

sedentary, and cross-legged positions all favourable to inward brooding, and, thereby to discontent. Far different is the Postman: he literally walks through life; absolutely knocks through a whole existence, transacting small government bargains, with no time to sit or stand and think of the iniquities, real or imaginary, of his political masters. We never heard of a Postman being concerned in a conspiracy; whilst what tongue has strength enough to count the cobblers! Again, if the Postman starts in life with a dapper figure, shall he not be slim and elegant to the last? Is he not certain of carrying to the grave his original greyhound outline? Gout shuns him; corpulency visits him not; whilst exercise crowns him with all its gifts, and claims the Postman as its own!

The Postman rarely knocks at the doors of the very poor; and when, perchance, he stands at the threshold of the indigent, it is too often to demand a sacrifice. The letter that he proffers must, perhaps, be purchased at the price of a dinner: at any cost, however, the letter must be possessed; for it comes from one who, it may be, has been silent for years; a far-off son, a married daughter. To thousands a letter is a forbidden luxury; an enjoyment, not to be bought by those who daily struggle with the dearest necessities, and who, once severed from a long distant home, are mute because they cannot fee the post, and will not, must not, lay the tax on others wretched as themselves. How much seeming neglect may have originated in the want of the post-office shilling!

Great was the delight—and then, no less the anxiety and disappointment—when to the surprise of the neighbours, the Postman halted at the door of an old widow who, with her daughter, dwelt in a miserable hut on the outskirts of —. The Postman, holding fast the letter, asked, “One shilling and a penny.” There was but one person in the world who could send the dwellers in that hovel a letter, and he—

The widow’s daughter sprang to the door, and with her eyes flashing, and her face in a flame, almost snatched the missive from the hand of the bearer.

The Postman tightened his thumb and finger on the letter, and again asked, “One shilling and a penny.”

The widow and her daughter looked at each other,—and then the old woman hobbled from the door, and burst into tears.

“I’ll call again to-morrow,” said the Postman: and he bore away the precious piece of paper.

On the next day the Postman was at the door.—“One shilling and a penny.”

What a paltry sum! and yet, since yesterday what efforts had

been made to obtain it. The girl had called on half-a-dozen neighbours: none could lend the money. The widow had for months been well-nigh bed-ridden; and so her hovel had been stripped to meet the wants of her forlorn old age. The mill, too, had stopped work for some weeks: with all their sufferings, never had the widow and daughter been in such a strait.

"One shilling and a penny."—"Strange!" thinks the reader, "that there should be such a pother about so paltry a sum; that from a dozen neighbours no such amount could be gathered as one shilling and a penny. It is incredible! Impossible!"

Still the letter remained at the post-office—and how, how to obtain it!

The village barber, Zachary Slum, was cross-grained, hump-backed, avaricious,—indeed, in the opinion of all who had the disadvantage of knowing him, there was no such ogre as Zachary Slum. He had long cast an affectionate—a longing eye on the charms of Molly: he had long hovered about her house, like an evil spirit, but had never been so constant in his visits as during the sickness of Molly's mother.

"And can you find it in your heart still to refuse me?" asked Zachary, looking languishingly upon Molly; "depend upon it, you don't know what's for your own good."

"I wonder at your impudence, Mr. Slum," cried Molly, who might as well have talked to one of the walnut-tree cherubs adorning the village pulpit; for the barber still unmoved, puffed out his cheeks, and smiled and gazed admiringly.

"And you won't be persuaded, Molly?" persisted Slum; "there's no melting you!"

"I'd rather die first!" exclaimed Molly, colouring at the pertinacity of the grinning barber.

"And is your mother so very bad?" cried Zachary, adroitly shifting the subject. "Poor old soul! Depend upon it, all she wants is a little chicken-broth; but then chickens are so dear."

"She has what the doctor bids her," answered Molly, moodily. —"I'll take care of that."

"But it's a dreadful thing to strip your house of all its little comforts; and if you'll take my offer—" and the barber leered.

"I won't," cried Molly vehemently: "and there's an answer."

"A crown's a crown," said Zachary Slum; and fillying the coin with his thumb and finger, it flew up, glittering in the angry eyes of Molly. "A crown's a crown," repeated Zachary.

"I wouldn't, then, if you'd give me five pounds," said Molly.

"You'll think better of it," persisted the barber,—"you'll not be such a fool to refuse such an offer," and Zachary turned from the door and limped away. Suddenly he stopped, and looking

towards Molly, called her a proud, insolent hussey, and begged to ask her where she expected to go to. And then the barber, believing that Molly would, at the last moment, relent, hobbled back to the door, flinging up the crown-piece and catching it, as he advanced. Just as he gained the threshold, and for the last time was about to repeat his magnificent offer, Molly disappeared, and shut the door in Slum's face.

Zachary returned his crown-piece to his pocket with the air of a deeply-injured man; and at night, at "The Bundle of Hay," gave it as his most dispassionate opinion, that "Molly was the proudest and most upstartest wench, and, if he knew what was what,—and he had never been mistaken—would certainly come to no manner of good. She had refused him, and that in the most impudent manner, what he had often had of her betters."

A fortnight only had elapsed since the repulse of Zachary Slum, when the Postman appeared with the letter.

"One shilling and a penny!"

For two days had Molly pondered on the means of possessing the precious, unexpected letter. Who could tell what wonderful news it might contain? Who could divine how much gladness might be had as payment of the postage—for "one shilling and a penny."

It was on the third morning, that the girl suddenly darted from the cottage. As she ran her beautiful hair (for Molly's auburn locks were, indeed, most beautiful) streamed behind her; and still she ran, as one of the neighbours said, like mad.

And whither went she? Alack! to the shop of the barber, the tempting mercenary Zachary Slum.

In half-an-hour Molly returned to her mother. The old woman almost screamed when she beheld her. "Why, Molly, where hast been, and what hast done?" cried the old woman, snatching the bonnet from the girl's head.

Molly only answered, "Here, Mother—here's the letter."

The reader has seen how Molly was tempted by Zachary Slum, who many a time had offered money for her beautiful long hair,—offered, only to be laughed at, chidden, refused. But now,—enough; Molly could bear no longer suspense; at any cost she must have that precious writing.

Molly, shorn of her locks, brought home the letter; the bribe of the barber had paid the Postman.

But in these days Rowland Hill had not given mere pennies wings to fly. Pennies too often needed shillings.

THE BALLAD-SINGER.

THE public ear has become dainty, fastidious, hypercritical : hence, the Ballad-Singer languishes and dies. Only now and then, his pipings are to be heard. Sometimes, like a solitary hermit frog, he croaks in a gutter ; at long intervals he "saws the air" with his foggy, jagged voice ; and, on rare occasions, it is to be found at nights in a melancholy, genteel street, warbling like a woodlark to the melting bosoms of congregated housemaids. Yes ; your Ballad-Singer is now become a shy bird : the national minstrel—the street troubadour—the minnesinger of the alley—the follower of the *gay seance* in London highways and by-ways, is fast disappearing from the scene ; his strains speedily to become, like the *falsest* of a Homer, matter of doubtful history. The London Ballad-Singer has fallen a victim to the arts of the Italian : he has been killed by breathings from the South, ground to death by barrel-organs from Lucca and Pisa, and Bologna *la Grassa*. To him, *Di tanti palpiti* has been a scirocco ; *Non piu andrai*, a most pestilent and withering air. Like the ruffian of a melo-drama, he has "died to music,"—the music of his enemies. Mozart, Rossini—yes, and Weber—signed his death-warrant, and their thousand vassals have duly executed it.

With the fall of Napoleon declined the English Ballad-Singer. During the war, it was his peculiar province to vend halfpenny historical abridgments of his country's glory ; recommending the short poetic chronicle by some familiar household air, that fixed it in the memory of the purchaser, who thus easily got hatred of the French by heart, with a new assurance of his own invulnerability. No battle was fought, no vessel taken or sunk, that the triumph was not published, proclaimed in the national gazette of our Ballad-Singer. It was his harsh, cracked, blatant voice that growled, squeaked, shouted forth the glorious truth, and made big the patriotic hearts of his humble and admiring listeners. If he were not the clear silver trump of fame, he was at least her tin horn. It was he who bellowed music into news, which, made

to jingle, was thus, even to the weakest understanding, rendered portable. It was his narrow strips of history that adorned the garrets of the poor ; it was he who made them yearn towards their country, albeit to them so rough and niggard a mother. Have we not great authority for praising the influence of the Ballad-Singer ? What says the wise, virtuous, gentle Sidney ?—"I never heard the old song of Percy and Douglas, that I found not my heart moved more than with a trumpet, and yet is sung but by some blind crowder, with no mightier voice than rude style."

Napoleon lost Waterloo, and the English Ballad-Singer not only lost his greatest prerogative, but was almost immediately assailed by foreign rivals, who have well-nigh played him dumb. Little thought the Ballad-Singer, when he crowed forth the crowning triumphs of the war, and in his sweetest possible modulations breathed the promised blessing of a golden peace, that he was then swan-like, singing his own knell ; that he did but herald the advent of his Provençal destroyers.

Oh, muse ! descend and say, did no omen tell the coming of the fall ? Did no friendly god give warning to the native son of song ? Burned the stars clearly, tranquilly in heaven,—or shot they madly across Primrose-hill, the Middlesex Parnassus ?

As on an Autumn eve, when all the winds were hushed, the trees are still ; when a deep silence is in the sky, and earth lies sleeping in the lap of peace,—suddenly a solemn sound is heard, and earth from her heart's core seems to send a sigh, and all the forest leaves shake and tremble in the twilight air, and yet no wind is felt upon the cheeks of John and Molly, straying in the grove.

So, evening had gathered o'er Saint Giles's ; and Seven Dials, tranquil in the balmy air, confessed a sudden peace. Nor garret, cellar, hostelry obscene, gave utterance to a sound. So tranquil was the season, even publishers were touched. Catnach and Pitts sat silent in their shops ; placing their hands in breeches-poke, with that serenity which pockets best convey, they looked around their walls—walls more richly decked than if hung with triumphs of Sidonian looms, arrayed with Bayeux stitchings ; walls where ten thousand thousand ballads—strips, harmonious, yet silent as Apollo's unbraced strings—hung pendulous, or crisply curling, like John Braham's hair. Catnach and Pitts, the tuneful masters of the gutter-choir, serenely looked, yet with such comprehensive glance, that look did take their stock. Suddenly, more suddenly than e'er the leaves in Hornsey wood were stirred by instant blast, the thousand thousand ballads swung and rustled on the walls ; yet wind there was not, not the

lightest breath. Still, like pendants fluttering in a northern breeze, the ballads streamed towards Catnach, and towards Pitts! Amazing truth—yet more; each ballad found a voice! “Old Towler” faintly growled; “Nancy Dawson” sobbed and sighed; and “Bright Chanticleer” crowed weakly, dolorously, as yet in chickenhood, and smitten with the pip.

At the same instant, the fiddle, the antique viol of old Roger Scratch, fell from its garret-peg, and lay shivered, even as glass.

A cloud fell upon Seven Dials; dread and terror chilled her many minstrels: and why—and wherefore?

At that dread moment a minstrel from the sunny South, with barrel-organ, leapt on Dover beach! Seven Dials felt the shock: her troubadours, poor native birds, were to be out-carolled and out-quavered by Italian strains. The poor were to have the Italian opera retailed by penn’orths to them, from the barrel-organ; and prompt to follow their masters, they let the English Ballad-Singer sing unheard.

The Ballad-Singer, though all but mute in these chromatic days, has done great service. Can we not hear him, far away, making homely, yet most welcome music to the yeomen, prentices, and milk-maids of Elizabeth? Did they not all “love a ballad in print?” Was not the minstrel a public servant of allowed utility? A most humanising wayfarer; now kindling, now melting the common heart? An outcast, ragged wanderer, in the benevolence of his vagabond calling, giving fitful respite to drudgery; making the multitude pause, and listen to a ballad, one of the fine old things that for these two hundred years have sweetened the air of common life, and are now fragrant and fresh as hawthorn buds,—a ballad, that could stir the heart of a Sidney “more than a trumpet?”

Two hundred years ago, and the street Ballad-Singer was not only the poet and musician for the poor, but he was their news-monger, their journalist. As then, the morning papers were not: the saints of Sunday showed not the spite of devils at Sabbath prints conned over by the poor; historians, encyclopædists, and philosophers were not purchaseable piecemeal by pennies; and though the Globe Theatre had its gallery for two-pence, the works of a certain actor, playing there, were not printed at the price. Hence, the Ballad-Singer supplied music and reading to the poor: he brought enjoyment to their very doors. He sung to them the news, the court gossip of the day, veiled perhaps in cunning allegory—for the virgin Queen would snip off the ears of a bookseller, as readily as her waiting-woman would snip a lace)—throwing on a dark point the light of a significant look,

and giving to the general obscurity of the text explanatory gestures, nods and winks, for the assistance of homespun understandings.

It is upon record that the Ballad-Singer must have acted no contemptible part in the civil-wars. Have we not evidence of his stirring, animating importance? Has the reader ever met with the "Songs of the Rump?" If so, can he not figure to himself the English Ballad-Singer, bawling, yelling the ditty in a groaning, rejoicing crowd, as party rose and fell? The very songs, at first written for a few, and sung in watchful secrecy in holes and corners, were, as the Commonwealth waned and died, roared, bellowed to the multitude. Hark, reader! what lungs of brass—now, what a roar of voices! Look, the music issues from the metal throat of yonder dirty-faced Phoebus in rags; and the shouts and laughter from the mob, frantic with joy at the burden of his lay—the downfall of old Noll, and the coming of the king, that silken, sorry rascal, Charles the Second. Now the ballad-singing rogue screams his joyful tidings! and how the simple, giddy-headed crowd, hungering for shows and holidays, toss up their arms and jump like satyrs! And there, darting, slinking by, passes the winching puritan, his face ash-coloured with smothered anger at the profane tune. And now, a comely gentleman makes through the crowd, and with a patronising smile, and bestowing something more than the cost price—for he is marvellously tickled with the theme,—secures a copy of the song. The reader may not at the instant recognise the buyer; he is, we can swear to him, one Mr. Samuel Pepys, afterwards secretary to the Admiralty: but what is more to his fame, the greatest ballad-collector of the day; let his treasures left to Cambridge, bear honourable witness for him. See, he walks down Charing-cross, carrying away the burden of the song, and with a light and loyal heart, humming, "And the king shall have his own again!" Who shall say that our Ballad-Singer has not shouted to crowds like these; has not vended his small ware to men, aye, as illustrious as the immortal writer of that best of history—history in undress—*The Diary*.

How many times has the Ballad-Singer, with voice no softer than the voice of Cyclops, set the nation's heart dancing? Though these days own him not—though this age reject his songs—let us not forget him as a national character: as one who has contributed to the enjoyments of wayfaring life; nay, as one who, in his humble vocation, may sometimes have vindicated life's best and highest purposes. He has been the poor man's minstrel, satirist, historian; nay, at certain seasons, he has been invested with almost sacerdotal gravity to prosperous men.

The snow is on the ground, the earth is like flint; the wind howls like a wild beast at the windows. How deliciously the fire burns! how the coals crackle, and the flame glows, as if in mockery of the blast and darkness without! A woman sings in the street: between December gusts you hear a sharp, tremulous human voice—wailing! No; it is the Christmas-carol; the homely burden sung two centuries ago: the self-same words, too, that Shakspeare in his childhood may have lain and listened to—that in his later years may have rapt his spirit, bearing it away to Bethlehem! The present, with all its monotonous commonplace, for a time is gone from us, and we live in the past. The wild melancholy strain—strengthened by old association—charms away almost two thousand years; and we seem for a space as of those who had an instant interest in the tidings told. The music, the words are a part of our earliest childhood—of childhood, that in its very innocence familiarises solemnities with itself; and we again go back, again seem almost contemporary with the wondrous Advent. And this sweet, though brief emotion, we may owe to the Ballad-Singer. The peevishness, the selfishness of earth is hushed, forgotten in the rich melodious thoughts born of his antique lay, begotten by the Christmas carol.

The Ballad-Singer has lost his occupation: yet should he not pass away unthanked, unrecompensed. We have seen him a useful minister in rude society: we have heard him a loud-mouthed advocate of party zeal; and we have seen him almost ground into silence by the southern troubadour. Yet was he the first music-seller in the land. Ye well-stocked, flourishing vendors of fashionable scores, deign to cast a look through plate-glass at your poor, yet great original, bare-footed and in rags, singing, unabashed, amidst London waggon-wheels: behold the true descendant of the primitive music-seller; of him, who, even two centuries ago, sold his lays without the help of other commendation than his own cracked yet honest voice; of him, who fed not journalists to advertise and trumpet forth his ditties, but, to the public ear, uttered the words and pitched the note himself; of him, who, innocent of the superfluous theory of *do re mi*, warbled in his own wild naturalness, and found an echo in the public heart. And oh! ye sellers of modern crotchets, tear, hide, burn your pictured scores, where ladies, with the best lump-sugar faces, engraved or lithographed, seduce the simple soul to purchase, fobbing him of two-and-sixpence; hide, ye deceivers, and, for the credit of the trade in general, try and contribute one blush among ye, at the simple, unsophisticated beauty heading our penny ballads; an honest face, hewed in honest

wood ; a fine, true, homely thing, its very homeliness shaming the prim, curled, smiling, leering, would-be-consumptive misses, exhibited in the windows of the fashionable music-seller to—we speak advisedly—the loss of much public money, and, what is almost as bad, to the imminent danger of public morality. If the lover of true pictorial beauty, illustrative of musical sentiment, would see, and seeing be uplifted and instructed, let him seek a dead wall, vivified and made harmonious by a thousand penny ballads. There, indeed, he may look on simple loveliness ; there, art, unadorned, naked as truth, woos and, if he be worth the catching, inevitably makes him captive. Hark ! listen ; melodies breathe from the bricks : that wall, so seeming mute and dead, is musical as the blocks of Memnon.

The Ballad-Singer of our day rarely rises above the blackguard (Southey has made the word classic) and vagabond. His strains are, for the most part, the vilest begging set to the vilest music. He takes temporary promotion at an election, merging the mendicant in the more honourable appointment of party-minstrel. He sings the merits of the new candidate, and exposes the frailties and venalities of his opponent, with a modesty and energy that sometimes reminds us of the House of Commons. The Ballad-Singer, pending the election—alas ! poor chorister, reform hath cruelly abridged his singing season—is, indeed, a parliamentary agent of no small importance ; he may take rank with the solicitor, the professional friend of the candidate ; and, if his voice and style of singing have won a few votes for his employer, they have doubtless been as honestly obtained as many procured by the man of law, who in the course of the canvas may have exhibited a sudden love of kittens and canaries, paying for them ten and twenty pounds per individual.

Still, however, we have the Political Ballad-Singer ; still the street-minstrel celebrates the downfall of a ministry ; still he has at times something to sing about the royal household. Now and then, too, he fearlessly attacks a growing vice, to the amusement if not to the edification of his hearers. Like the preacher, however, the Ballad-Singer finds his auditors increase with the fierceness and causticity of his style. A short time since, we paused to listen to the mud-notes wild of a street-singer : it grieves us to state, that he sang not to the praise, but to the dishonour of women, who, nevertheless, with the characteristic patience that ennobles them, making them smile wickedness itself into good behaviour, stood in a ring of five or six deep about the slanderer, mutely, hanging upon the fellow's words, and now and then uttering the prettiest contempt of his miserable libels. *However, in the face of one creature we saw the growing anger spot ;*

"Infamous! he ought to be taken up, come away!" and she urged a matronly companion, who placidly replied, "Not yet, Mary Anne—let's wait, only just to hear how far the fellow's impudence will carry him." (It would possibly shock the self-love of many sulphureous lecturers, followed as they seem for the beauty of their talk, were the true cause of their popularity as ingeniously unfolded to them.)

The Sailor Ballad-Singer has died with the long peace; he no longer attacks our sympathies with one arm and a wooden leg; maimed limbs have become scarce. Now and then, when we presume little is to be got by picking pockets—for, in all professions, there is, probably, a longer or shorter vacation—half-a-dozen fellows condescend to wear check shirts, and if the weather be fiercely cold, to walk with bare, clean-washed feet, executing, as they pick their way, "Ben Bowline," or at times plunging with one accord into the "Bay of Biscay."

At times we come upon ballad-singing that has its plaintiveness; a pathos, independent of the words and air, though the ballad shall be sweetly sung. May such singing be seldom heard; may the passenger be rarely stopped when hurrying on a winter's night homeward, by the low, sweet voice of some thinly-clad woman, hugging her child, for whom and it may be for others, her wretched minstrelsy is to buy a supper. We have heard such singing; and the tune of the minstrel, the intonation of the words, told a tale of misery; declared that she had suffered many rubs of fortune; that she was not born to sing the requiem of her own lungs in November's fog and January's blast.

The respectable Ballad-Singer is our aversion: the impostor who, acting in broad day an overwhelming sense of his degradation, sings in strictest confidence to himself; or, when *fortissimo* shall be no louder than that of a bee bumbling in a flower. He is, he will tell you, a most respectable tradesman, who has endured incalculable losses; and who, if you could really come to his secret history, would much rather try to sing than work. The true interests of ballad-singing, as a picturesque calling, have been much injured by such varlets.

The Ballad-Singer who at watering-places carols to young ladies, and sings away the peace of families, is not to our purpose. He is beyond the minstrel of the gutter, and not quite up to the Apollo of a tea-gardens. Besides, there is a mystery about him which we care not to unravel. Heaven knows, he may be a Polish prince, and he may be only a runaway pin-maker.

We have now no Ballad-Singers of character; no professed, constant minstrels, chanting their daily rounds, and growing

grey, it may be, to one everlasting strain—to one untiring song. The knaves who now chirp in the highways are, like grasshoppers, but of a season; their music tarries not with us; their sweet voices pass from our memories with the air they die upon; they make no part of our household recollections, but are thankfully got rid of at the turning of the street. It was not always so. The reader must remember two or three Ballad-Singers of his youth, whose harmonies rude or dulcet still vibrate in his heart, and make a child of him again. For ourselves, we have two—nay, three favourites of the highway minstrelsy. It is but to name them, and if the reader be of London breeding, he needs must recognise the vocal wayfarers.

Our first acquaintance was an old blind man, familiarly named Billy. He had only one song: it was, however, recommended by a fiddle accompaniment. Billy's song—it had worn him into wrinkles—was,

“ Oh! listen—listen to the voice of love! ”

Billy had a rich *falsetto*. Billy knew it: hence you could have sooner drawn him from his skin than make him quit his *falsetto*; for he would murmur, preludise a few low notes, then rush into it, and, once there, he knew too well his own strength to quit it on small occasion. Billy's *falsetto* was his fastness, where he capered and revelled in exulting security. We hear it now; yes, we listen to his “love” whooping through wintry darkness—proudly crowing above the din of the street—shouting triumphantly above the blast—a loud-voiced Cupid “horsing the wind.” Was it a fine cunning on the part of the musician—we trust it was—that made him subdue into the lowest mutterings all the rest of the song, giving the whole of his *falsetto*, and with it all his enthusiasm, to the one word “love?” If this were art, it was art of the finest touch. Nor must we pass the fingering of his instrument: he would tuck his chin into his bosom, and smiling, now blandly, now grimly, on that soul-ravishing bit of wood, twitch and snatch, and drag away its music with most potent and relentless hand; more, he was so absorbed, so bound by his art, that if the fiddle had been suddenly displaced for a battledore, we believe that Billy would have bowed and fingered away all heedless of the change. Poor Billy! He had a sleek, happy, well-fed look; and though we have known a worse *falsetto* than his ten thousand times better paid, we have a comfortable hope that it procured for him all the decencies of board and lodging. We have liked several Ballad-Singers; but Billy was a “first-love.”

Has the reader ever been startled by

—"Philomel down in the grove,"

suddenly piped into his ear—and, looking round, has he discovered an old, lean, withered woman, who—after some investigation—has proved to be the minstrel? Twenty years ago she sang that one song, and then it seemed the song of the swan—a dying strain: then she was age-stricken, and now—we heard her not a month ago—she seems no older. We had lost her for some years, when one night,

—"Philomel down in the grove,"

with its shrill charm, brought back scenes of boyhood. Its wailing, melancholy sound was as the voice of departed years; the requiem of a hopeful time.

Can we close this paper, without one word to thee, O, William Waters? Blithest of blacks! Ethiopian Grimaldi! They who saw thee not, cannot conceive the amount of grace co-existent with a wooden leg—the comedy budding from timber. Then Billy's complexion! We never saw a black *so* black: his face seemed polished, trickling with good-humour. Who ever danced as he danced? Waters was a genius; his life gave warranty of it, nor did his death disprove it, for he died in a workhouse.

We would say one word on—not a Ballad-Singer, but an instrumental musician. If the reader be four-score-ten, he must as a thing of his childhood, remember a little blind woman, with a face like a withered apple, who still plays upon the hurdy-gurdy. No man can tell the age of that minstrel; for she lives and grinds music at this very hour. There was a dark legend that, some years ago, she was an opera-singer—a *prima donna* of even more than professional caprice and arrogance—and that, as a punishment, Apollo doomed her to the menial footing of a pedestrian musician. The tale is in some measure borne out by the fact that she walks rapidly on, never pausing for the alms of the charitable, but turning, turning, eternally turning. It is said that this her punishment is to continue until opera-singers become not a whit more conceited or more arrogant than other people. If such be the case, God help that woman!

We close our paper with an anecdote of Bishop Corbet—all ought to know his cordial poems—who, when a doctor of divinity, one day at Abingdon heard a Ballad-Singer complain that he could not sell his ware. On which, the doctor donned the minstrel's leathern jacket, "went out into the street, and drew around him a crowd of admiring buyers."

THE HANGMAN.

IN Sir John Suckling's incoherent play of "The Goblins," a certain courtier is thus apostrophised :

"A foolish utensil of state
Which, like old plate upon a gaudy day,
'S brought forth to make a show, and that is all,
For of no use you are."

The sentence fits the Hangman better than the courtier ; is even a juster description of the man of hemp than of the man of brocade ; for with ourselves, the legendary grimness of the licensed man-killer suffers from the foolishness—the utter inutility of his calling ; he is, indeed, a wicked superfluity ; and yet the official iniquity appears less, from a besetting conviction of its absurdity. Our disgust is, in a strange degree, allayed by our contempt. The Hangman is a man of terrors ; notwithstanding, there are moods in which we cannot refuse to him the cap and bells. The folly of the employer is reflected on the employed. The statesman, though he despatch with sad and solemn brow the sacrilegious death-warrant, by the very farce enacted by virtue of the instrument, makes the Hangman little else than clown to the rope.

"But, murder, sir—murder," says a placid gentleman, oozing at the lips with Christian precept ; "surely, sir—God bless me !—surely you would hang for murder ?"

Blood has been shed : yes, in some fiend-like brawl, a miserable wretch, denaturalized by rage—goaded by revenge—or, more appalling still, pricked on by gain—sheds blood. He murders his fellow-man, and on the instant, from crown to sole, is he become a monster : humanity shrinks from contact with him : we turn from the murderer's eye as from a basilisk ; to breathe with him the same atmosphere is, we feel, to breathe contagion. He stands, to our imagination, horribly dilated—as though possessed by the everlasting demon. He is set apart—fenced

from us by horrors : his brow is festering with the brand of Cain ; his look reveals the flames within. With the face and form and speech of man, he is become as one of the doomed.

It is thus we see the murderer : it is thus we look upon and consider the wretch contaminated with human blood ; it is thus, appalled by his blasphemy, our imagination surrounds him with a multitude of terrors ! Yes, he has taken human life ; he has sacrilegiously destroyed God's own image ; he has, at a blow, struck his fellow into eternity ; he has defyingly usurped the power of God ; and we curse, and loathe to very sickness, the evil-doer. By such intense, unconquerable disgust of the homicide we prove—what ? Our sense of the sacredness of human life ; our conviction of the holiness vouchsafed to the spirit of man by his Maker ; of its present high immunities, and of its mighty end. The lowest beggar—the veriest wretch that houseless, naked, brutalized by ignorance and suffering, shocks our finer sensibilities, making us shrink from man as from a reptile—even he is rendered sacred by the divinity within him ; even that foul, that loathsome tenement of clay, becomes a living temple unto God, for it is consecrated and made holy by immortal hopes.

What says the statesman, speaking through his chosen servant the Hangman ? What example does he shew—what lesson does he preach from his high place, the gallows ? By what profound, what wise, what heart-assuring process, does he make manifest to the reckless and the low the sacredness of the living man ? How, by his proxy, the yeoman of the rope, does he prove his veneration for the prime work of God—his sense of horror at the quenching of human life ? The Hangman shall tell us.

It is four in the morning. The sky is black as pitch, and the drizzling November rain seems to sink into our very flesh. All is coldness, dreariness, desolation. We emerge from a bye-lane into one of the broad highways of London. What sudden animation ! The road streams with passengers : boys and men, and women—some with infants at their breasts—pass lightly on, laughing, talking, as to a merry-making, a holiday. Surely, some national festival is afoot. Nothing less could have stirred the people at such a season thus early from their beds ; nothing less could impart to them such vivacity of motion, such laughter, such careless merriment. For see—how that knot of youths, in the buoyancy of animal spirits, foot it, and dance as they go, upon the pavement ; and now one suddenly stops, and tickled by the exquisite jest of a companion, leans nearly doubled with laughter

against the lamp-post ; and now, the sharp, shrill voice of a woman rings with enjoyment. Yes ; it must be the advent of a general fête. However, let us mix with the increasing mirthful crowd ; let us go with the stream.

A quarter of an hour, and we arrive at evidently the sought-for place ; for a crowd is already gathered, a crowd constantly increased from half-a-dozen avenues. How the people pour in ! What anxiety they manifest to see a sight ! See—the gates open, and rumbling heavily, a massive platform is drawn into the street. Yes ; this must be the spot ; and this is the stage where-upon the national game is played ; or whence, probably, prizes, civic crowns and garlands, are distributed to a virtuous people ; so wise, so humanising, so philosophic, are the statesmen that govern them ; so profoundly learned in the motives, the affections, and the weaknesses of mankind ; and so intent on directing, elevating, and correcting them. “Yes,” says the Brahmin, the Chinese, or Japanese ; for the reader must understand it is some such barbarian who has followed the crowd down Holborn, and now smiles complacently about him before the debtor’s door, Newgate ; “now shall I see a national festival ; now shall I behold a practical lesson of humanity, benevolence, wisdom, and truth ! On that platform the English statesman will take his place, and in the fulness of his knowledge, in the abundance of his philanthropy, in what he is proud to call the meekness and loving-kindness of his Christianity, he will reward some happy two or three, amidst the rejoicings of this numerous multitude ; he will hang medals about the necks of a few, which medals will awaken in the breasts of the many an ardour and longing to follow the ways of the rewarded ; that they themselves, in due season, may be alike distinguished. What a festal scene !” thinks the stranger ; “what a mirthful, happy, populace ! to leave their beds so early, and in this horrible climate, to wait four hours (for he has this instant, with some difficulty, been made to understand that the show does not take place until eight o’clock), to see the distribution of national rewards. What a light-hearted race !” again thinks the barbarian ; and he smiles to see a British youth, in the exuberance of his hilarity, knock the hat of a companion over his eyes and nose, whilst another joyous, waggish-looking sprite, with hands as quick and light as fins visits every pocket of the discomfited. And still the jest and the quip is heard, although the hammers applied to the national platform ring jarringly upon the ear.

The stranger is suddenly addressed by a vender of refectations, and tempted to a game of chance for little toothsome pasties of

pork and mutton; and the barbarian, graciously refusing, ponders upon the gulosity of the English, who cannot, he concludes, even congregate to do honour to a national festival, and be for the time forgetful of their bellies. The stranger, however, has travelled, and learned to make allowances for the various habits of his kind; hence, he smiles, and philosophically watches the abstruse game of "heads-and-tails" unceremoniously played beside the platform of the nation.

Hark! what peals of laughter—what stamping—what clapping of hands! The festive noise proceeds from the opposite hostelry, crammed with the richer merry-makers, some of whom have given much silver,—nay, some pieces of gold, to the master of the dwelling, that they may sit at the window and see the distribution of the national prizes; may the more surely observe—and be edified thereby—the expression of countenances, and the general demeanour with which the men rewarded receive the wise and philosophic bounty of the state. There is a lull for a minute; and then the stranger listens to a song, poured forth from a chest of brass; a song as from the throat of Cyclops. The barbarian can only make out the burthen, and that runs—

"And now I am cut off in the height of my prime!"

Yes, such are the words; for thirty voices join in chorus,—

"And now I am cut off in the height of my prime,"

drowns the noise of the hammers still knocking at the national platform; and all is jollity and loud-mouthed mirth.

The barbarian, curious in English customs, cannot restrain his desire to mingle with that choral throng. He makes his way into the room; and, with all his allowance for national peculiarities, he is somewhat offended at the scene opening upon him. The room is densely clouded with smoke; but, after a time, he is enabled to make out the forms and faces of the merry-makers. Men and women, there may be in all some fifty. The greater number are roaring in chorus; but some are stupidly silent; some fast asleep; some half-chuckling and making mouths, in the impotence of drunkenness. How strange—how wrong—thinks the barbarian, that the mighty, the victorious, the moral, the wonderful English, should derogate from a national festival by licence such as this! How unfortunate, that they cannot restrain their enthusiasm; and, being assembled to witness what I have frequently heard called in this happy and enlightened country, a great moral lesson, they cannot so far temper their natural ardour as to refrain from brandy, rum, gin beer, and

tobacco ! It is thus the stranger philosophises ; and still the minstrel sings—

“ And now I am cut off in the height of my prime ; ”

would still continue the lay, but that the cry of “ Sheriffs ! ” from the mob without, silences the singer, and all rush to the window.

It is very provoking, and would stir the blood of any other but a philosopher, to pay a round sum for the enjoyment of a national sight, and then, by the enthusiasm, the generous violence of the crowd, to be wholly shut out from a view of the revel. But so it is with our Brahmin in the Old Bailey ; men and women are thick as bees at the windows ; others are mounted upon tables ; and our philosopher, despite his polite endeavours to obtain even a peep at the solemnity, is told to “ stand where he is, and be d—d.” Our Brahmin placidly complies with a part of the injunction, for he cannot leave the house. However, debarred from the window, he is enabled—and it is something he thinks—to learn the moral impressions made upon the spectators by the ceremony without ; yes, he can gather from their natural, their unsophisticated expressions, the influence of the show upon the hearts of the beholders. He has solaced himself with this conviction, when he hears cries in the street—

“ Hats off—down there !—you in the white hat and crape—you in butcher’s mourning—bonnet him !—silence ! ”

Yes, says the Brahmin, the ceremony is about to begin ; the national games are about to commence. He then, still as completely shut out from the sight as if on the banks of the Ganges, —he then ventures to enquire of a luckier neighbour, how many are that morning to be rewarded ? He asks, and readily obtains an answer :—

“ Vy, old cock, there’s strings for six.”

I was right, concludes the Brahmin ;—strings—with medals, no doubt.

“ Here’s the white wands ! ” cry a dozen voices at the window, and the stranger is greatly interested by the impatient manner, the animated voices of the more fortunate beholders.

“ Oh, Lord ! oh, Lord ! ” exclaims a woman, “ there’s the parson.”

Admirable people ! thinks the Brahmin ; who so wisely constantly associate the beauties of your most beautiful and most charitable creed with all your public rewards,—with even your public holidays.

“ One—two—there’s Jack ! ”—

“ God bless him ! ”—

"How lovely he looks!"

"Drest as if for a wedding!"—sobs a woman.

"And there's Tom!—He sees me—he sees me—God be with you, Tom!"

"And God will bless 'em all!" cries another female, bursting into tears.

The Brahmin, touched by the earnest ejaculations of the spectators at the window, affected by the pleasing passion of the women, wept; but they were the tears of pleasantness, the offerings of a sympathetic spirit. "God will bless them all," murmured the Brahmin.

"Vy, there's only four?" cries a spectator, with a whining tone of disappointment.

"There must be six," cries another, "six was the number."

"No; d—d if there's only four!" exclaims a third.

Possibly the other two, thinks the Brahmin, have not, on examination, been found of sufficient worth to be alike rewarded with the rest. It must be a joyous sight, thinks the stranger, with all his philosophy much excited by the passionate exclamations of the people before him; some of whom call down, albeit in homely phrase, a shower of benedictions on the heads of the rewarded; whilst others seem to glow with admiration at their noble bearing on so interesting an occasion. Two or three however, look back into the room, their faces sullen with suppressed passion. These, thought the Brahmin, are the malevolent and envious.

"He's shaking their hands! The Lord bless 'em!"—

"How Tom stands! Like a rock! What pluck!"—

"Darling fellow!"—

"Doesn't shake a finger!"—

"He's gone below, cries a woman, her voice suddenly husky; and fixing her nails, like a beast of prey, in the arm of her companion. "He's gone."—

"God bless 'em! God bless 'em! God—God!"—

A jarring sound—a fall—a loud groan, sounding of hate and horror from a thousand hearts—now the shriek and screams of women—and now—the silence of the tomb!

This national ceremony, thinks the Brahmin, must have in it something very solemn. It is right—it is very right. The solemnity of the reward increases the reward; makes it still to live in the brain, and beat in the heart of the beholder.

"Mike!"—cries a spectator, his face black with rage, rushing from the window, and incapable of giving utterance to his passion, striking the table with his clenched knuckles—"Mike!"

a pint of brandy, and 'bacco for ten!" saying this, the man flings himself into a chair, and passing his fingers through his hair, laughs like a demon.

Our Brahmin, astonished at the countenances turned from the window, marvelling at the tears of some—the indifference, the indignation painted in others,—after a pause, ventures to creep to the casement. He looks at the work of the Hangman; and stupified, sick with terror, he tumbles in a heap upon the floor. The landlord, very considerably, has the stranger removed up-stairs: he is put to bed: falls into a doze: sleeps for an hour, might have slept longer, but that he is awakened by the chorus below, led by the man who gave Mike the order for brandy and tobacco; the chorus bellowing—

"And now I am cut off in the height of my prime!" *

Such are the rewards of the Hangman; such the feelings and thoughts of his countrymen; such is his recompense when, on the public scaffold, he throttles a man before thousands of lookers-on, to show to them the sacredness of human life; to make known to the world the crime, the horror, the ineffaceable guilt of destroying our fellow-man. The Hangman kills to prove the iniquity of killing.

"But, Scripture, sir," says the Hangman, "Scripture, sir, says—what are the words?—oh—'He that killeth any man shall surely be put to death.'"

Tarry a little, good yeoman of the halter.

"And Cain said unto the Lord, my punishment is greater than I can bear.

"Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth; and from thy face shall I be hid, and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth, and it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me shall slay me.

"And the Lord said unto him, therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him, seven-fold. And the Lord set a mark upon Cain lest any finding him should kill him."

Still the Hangman would hang upon the warranty of Scripture; supported in his faith by those Christian philosophers, who, to make secure a darling prejudice, are ever more prone to take their arguments from Leviticus than from St. Matthew. They can unsuspectingly be Jews for the nonce, when they would take "an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth;" and in proportion to their readiness to exact severe retribution on the good Mosaic principle, is their wonder and their marvel, when forced to go

one mile out of their way, they are expected to go willingly "twain." The Hangman and his supporters make the Scriptures strange skipping-ground.

Let us, however, consider the Hangman at his employment. He has proceeded in his task ; yes, he has prepared the wretch for death, and gone below to draw the bolt. What are the Hangman's services to the people ? What is preached to them by the miserable thing, pinioned, and haltered, and in another instant to be—what ? Who shall say ? The statesman, the Hangman's employer, in the mercifulness of his creed, pays for Christian comfort to be administered to the felon by a Christian priest. All praise to the statesman that it is so ! Well ? How labours the clergyman ? What are the goodly fruits of his eloquent exhortations ? If the felon have made himself sufficiently notorious to be an object of great public curiosity, we are from time to time assured, in a tone of congratulation, that the unfortunate man becomes every day more impressed with the truths of divine mercies and divine revelation. Thus gloriously instructed, the murderer is led forth to death. The gallows, it has been preached to him, is made the threshold of heaven : in a thought, and he will be with the angels ; for the statesman

"———would not kill his unprepared spirit ;
No, heaven forfend ! he would not kill his soul !"

Hence, standing between the beam and the pit, the felon stands, not as a wretch to be loathed, execrated ; but as one of the chosen :

"Wings at his shoulders seemed to play !"

The drop falls : the sacredness of human life is illustrated upon the crowd by the death-struggles of the hanged : the hour passes : night comes ; and flung into a prison-hole, quick-lime eats up the bones of the assassin. And this is the Hangman's great moral example : this the punishment !

Death would, indeed, be punishment, could it only be administered by the executioner ; but as God has made it the draught for all men ; the inevitable cup to be drained to the dregs by all who live ; since there is not one man privileged to pass it ; is not that a strange punishment for the deepest wickedness of guilt, if the same evil must at the last foreclose the life of the nobly good ?

"But," says the Hangman, "your virtuous man dies with friends weeping about him ; his death may, indeed, be most gracious, whilst the men who come into my hands"—

Both are flung into the same eternity ; and—hark !—what sound is that approaching the steps of the gallows. Hark ! yes—the felon is pinioned ; the procession is formed ; and the hopeful and inspiring voice of the prison chaplain says :—

“I AM THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE, SAITH THE LORD : HE THAT BELIEVETH IN ME, THOUGH HE WERE DEAD, YET SHALL HE LIVE : AND WHOSOEVER LIVETH AND BELIEVETH IN ME SHALL NEVER DIE.”

THE LINEN-DRAPER'S ASSISTANT.

"NOTHING else to day, madam?"

"N—o; n—othing else," replies the lady; and ere she has deliberately pulled on her glove, there is something else unrolled before her.

"A beautiful thing, madam; and" (this is said half-confidentially) "the first of the season."

The lady, with a predetermination not to buy, asks (but only in the way of curiosity) "How much?" On this, the linen-draper's man, lowering his voice as though he felt within him a glow of shame to utter to the winds the (to her) absurdly low price for so beautiful an article, blandly smiles, and whispers the sum.

"Humph! ha! I don't much like the colour,"* says the lady,—the article being very dear.

"I do assure you, madam, the only colour that is,—I mean, that will be, worn;—a beautiful colour! Upon my honour! a colour that, of all colours—quite a new colour!—so far away from the common!—you really—pray—a thousand pardons!—but allow me to give it the benefit of a little more light;—a delightful colour!—not but what it looks infinitely better in the dress than in the piece."

"Some colours"—and the lady begins to melt; and her husband's pocket (the poor man at the time, perhaps, driving his honest calling in the corn-markets or the Stock Exchange; or, it may be, in the sweet precincts of Furnival's Inn or Chancery

* Ladies have generally a fine eye for colour, albeit they sometimes (if we are to believe Dr. George G. Sigmond) exercise the faculty a little capriciously. The doctor asserts, that even in the article of rhubarb, colour is a great object with the fair; for, says the Doctor, "it is a well-known fact, that 'fashionable druggists' (there really ought to be 'fashionable viscera') are obliged to gratify the eye of an elegant customer; and many a fine lady would not take rhubarb if the colour did not come up to the precise standard of her inclinations."

Lane, displaying the practical philanthropy of the law to ignorant men who cannot understand the full philosophy of costs in its comprehensive excellence): we say that, as the lady relents, the pocket of her husband (if the pocket have sympathy—and some misanthropists have stated it to be the seat of the passions) must shrink with apprehension—"Some colours," says the lady, "do look better in the dress: I think I'll try it."

(Here have we a golden piece of advice for all husbands and fathers. The advice is, we know, second-hand, but, like a second-hand guinea, has not lost part of its value in its transit from a friend.)

The Very Reverend Archdeacon Paley, in one of his familiar table discourses, touching upon the expenses brought by original sin upon husbands and fathers in the way of cambrics and satins, says:—"I never let my women (be it understood he spoke of Mrs. Archdeacon Paley and the Misses Paley)—I never let my women, when they shop, take credit; I always make them pay ready money, sir: ready money is such a check upon the imagination!"

There is fine philosophy in this,—a fine orthodox view of human nature. However, as some readers may dissent from the implied wisdom of the position, we can supply such disagreeing parties with an antagonistic axiom from the self-same reverend author: for it is also to Archdeacon Paley we owe the following advice:—"Never pay money until you can't help it: *something may happen*."* The reader may say, "Here are two principles, opposite as white and black;" to which we make answer, that we show the said principles as the linen-draper shows his goods of many hues: our customers may select the colour that suits them best.)

It is the prime duty of the linen-draper's shopman to make wants for his gentle customers; his one question succeeding inevitably the sale of an article—"Nothing else?"

"*Nothing else?*" This sinister interrogative, this mischievous Puck, waylays men in their private walks; comes to them day-dreaming a-bed; infests the hearth; nay, goes with them to the Exchange; and has been known to possess very respectable people, supposed at the time, to be giving all their hearts and ears in their family pew, to a touching sermon, on "The Vanity of Human Wishes."

* A living Jew had doubtless heard this maxim; for having, not many months since, been cast in an action for damages, he said confidentially to his attorney, when speaking of payment to the histrionic plaintiff, at the time very ill, "For God's sake, put him off, *he may die!*"

"Nothing else?" Captain Brace had made a very handsome fortune in the South Seas;—the whales had taken to him kindly;—and he came home, bought house and land in Devonshire, grew his own corn, and killed his own mutton. Who so happy as Captain Brace? What, "nothing else?" inquired the imp, one day meeting the captain in a pensive mood—"Nothing else?" The query sufficed. The captain immediately set his heart upon a coach and house in town: he kissed his wife, hugged his children, took ship for "only another voyage,"—and behold! coming home, the ship went down, and the captain's bones lie buried in the Goodwins!

"Nothing else?" Our great Aunt Penelope was a charming independent maiden at the age of forty-one; a happy soul, with one of the handsomest country-houses in the west of England: her currant wine was as spotless as her virtue; and many a licensed dealer in champagne would have blushed the deepest crimson at her real gooseberry. Suddenly she became serious: Aunt Penelope sighed, and assured inquiring friends, that she was wasting to a shadow! What could ail Aunt Penelope? In an evil hour, a regiment from Cork had been quartered in the town: and one fine sunshiny Sunday, as the veterans marched to church, her eye fell upon Sergeant Macfillyloo, a warrior of six foot three; and as their eyes met, the demon of all domestic mischief whispered, in the sweetest tones, to Aunt Penelope, "Nothing else?"—and the unwary maiden bought the sergeant out, married him, and became—almost within the same month—Mrs. Macfillyloo, and the most wretched of women.

"Nothing else?" is, in matters of trade, the peculiar weapon of the linen-draper. He puts the question in the most unquestionable way: he is sure there *is* something else; he knows the wants, the wishes of the fair dealer, and, with a benevolent alacrity, proceeds to unrol another article. For the time, the price is not to be thought of; every meaner consideration is utterly forgotten in the crying necessity of the customer. Silks and cambrics lie glistening "many a rood" upon the counter, and the fascination is, nine times out of ten, irresistible. "Let no man say," exclaims Sterne, "'I'll write a duodecimo:' matter grows under our hand." Let no lady say, "I will buy three yards of muslin:" gowns are to be sold!

We know of no race of dealers so gracious, so alert, and so unwearied, as linen-draper. To be sure, they are every day twelve hours at school, and are taught by the prettiest teachers. Their governesses are among the loveliest of the earth; and the manners of the pupil must necessarily smack of the gentleness and forbearance of the preceptress.

And yet these men (so capricious and so discontented is human nature) are at this moment clamouring for leisure—for time for self-improvement! What would they have? Are they not the chosen servitors of the fair? Do they not for nine, ten, eleven hours per diem, only six days out of the week, live in the very atmosphere of beauty? What have they to do but to take down and put by; to smile, to speak softly, to protest; and, for the benefit of the "concern," to tell a lie with the grace of perfect gentlemen?

"My friends and fellow-sufferers," said one of these men at a recent public meeting, somewhere convened, to consider the rights and wrongs of the shopmen:—"Friends and fellow-sufferers! the Linen-Draper's Assistant is little better than a hedgehog [Hear!]: for twelve hours a-day he has little more to do than to unroll, and then roll himself up again!" [Cheers!]

Still, there are bright minutes in the long day of the Linen-Draper's Assistant;—minutes of half-confidence with shopping beauty, coveted in vain by other dealers: and the address, the delicacy displayed by him on these occasions, test him as the master of his craft. There are certain questions which he hazards with a self-deprecating look, as though he were "dallying with an interdicted subject." It is, as we have observed, the linen-draper's province to suggest the want of things, the very existence of which is not to be merely doubted, but to be utterly unknown to mankind at large. It is his business to harp continually, by inference, upon the result of the "fall," and to impress upon the minds of Eve's daughters the consequence of their first mother's transgression. And this the linen-draper does in so bland, so smiling a manner;—in the generosity of his nature is so utterly forgetful of the share his own sex bears in the general calamity, that it should be no wonder when we see ladies as generously forgive the insinuation, and as largely buy.

Charles Lamb, in one of his letters, in allusion to the fruitless condition of our original father, says, "It irks me to think of poor Adam laying out his halfpenny for apples in Mesopotamia!" This regret of the philosopher presents to our mind Eve at the linen-draper's. We see the shopman bow and smile, and roll out, and roll out, and roll out! The lady purchases; and, it may be, the necessity of the purchase—the evil that makes it indispensable—is, for a time, wholly forgotten in the loveliness of the article bought. "Nothing else?" asks the shopman: and other trifles are rolled out—measured—cut. At length, the Assistant assumes his delicate privilege; and having suggested *all the known and palpable common-places of dress, stops, smiles,*

and with his palms upon the counter, and his eyes half-abashed, half-closed, lets two words escape flutteringly—"Any flannel?"

And yet these are the men who wish their condition ameliorated! Men, licensed to put queries such as these to the best beauty of the earth—the aforesaid beauty taking the interrogative with the sweetest possible grace, and thus granting indulgence for new inquiries! "Any flannel?" But we cannot—we may not pause to philosophise on the question: we leave it in its suggestive simplicity to the imagination of our readers.

The Linen-Drapers' Assistants crave time that they may improve their minds; they would fain know if all human existence is to be passed in unrolling and rolling goods, and pressing remnants thereof. They think it much to work twelve and fourteen hours a-day, albeit half the time is spent in pretty protestations to pretty faces, for the benefit of the firm! What would they learn—morals? If so, do they think, by the successful pursuit of the study, they would render themselves more available to the masters of Oxford and Regent Streets?

"Will it wash?" was once the inquiry of a gentlewoman, as the linen-draper displayed to her a "beautiful article," quite new. "Will it wash?" asked the lady. "Wash, madam!" replied the shopman, "I'll warrant it to wash!" The piece was bought; and in a fortnight or less, the lady returned to state her grievous wrong. "You told me, sir, the print would wash!" she exclaimed, showing to the unmoved shopman the colourless purchase. "Very true, madam—I said it would wash—I pledged myself to the fact—but I did not say it would keep its colour." This man—we really speak of breathing flesh, and not of any linen-draper of the imagination—was a genius; and had his rightful reward in the approving smiles of his master. Let us, however, suppose that he had had time for self-improvement, and had answered the "Will it wash?" in the spirit of honesty, replying in the negative. He would probably have received sundry silver medals in token of the feelings of his master on the occasion, with a recommendation to seek a nobler sphere for the exercise of his heroic virtue.*

We want to know what these misguided young men wish to have. If they become rigid truth-tellers, there is an end to business. "I don't know any house," said the most respectable head of a most respectable firm, "I don't know any house that

* It is said that Mrs. Siddons, supposed to be absorbed in the consideration of professional matters, once put to a linen-draper, "Will it wash?" in tones that made the shopman gasp again. Had she, as *Lady Macbeth*, asked, "Are you a man?" she could not have produced a greater effect upon her auditor

could last a month with such a state of things. Truth, sir, truth is very well in a story, or in a sampler, or in any matter of that sort; but the downright, naked, plain truth behind a counter—pooh!—I should like to know how, by such means, we are to pay rent and taxes.”

“There’d be a pretty list of bankrupts every week, I take it,” cried another, with a sly wink and an anticipatory chuckle at the social chaos.

“When I was a young man,” says a retired linen-draper, who during the war, had a confidential, and withal not unprofitable correspondence with sundry gallant smugglers—“When I was a young man, I never heard of such an article as mind.”

“Nor I neither,” observes another; “but I suppose it is a new thing, just come up.”

We entreat the Linen-Drapers’ Assistants to dwell in their present Arcadian simplicity; to enjoy the many delicious prerogatives of their profession, and, by calmly and deliberately considering the foregoing sentences—would we could print them in gold!—of heads of firms, to put it to themselves what must necessarily be the forlornness of their condition, if, by resolving to improve their minds, they raise themselves, in vulgar phrase, above their business! Can Cato measure muslin? Can Aristides put in a bad article, and swear it to be first-rate? Why should a man, whose doom is to tear calicos, attend a lecture on the solar system? What has “The Quarterly Review” to do with

“Lawn, as white as driven snow?”

What is there in common between gingham and geometry?—what in the study of Malthus and fashionable checks?

The spring season should have its peculiar charms in the thousand new patterns that it brings—but it is therefore only spring. Why should the Linen Draper’s Assistant wish to know if grass be green, or if, indeed, there be vegetating sprigs, or, indeed, sprigs of any description, save in his prints and his muslins? If the shop-window blossom, it is enough for him; in the yard measure—seeming dead wood—bud like Aaron’s rod, and bear golden pippins for the master, it is, or it ought to be, all-sufficient for the man.—Cannot the Assistant sweat under the gas without yearning to haunt the Mechanics’ Institution, to learn the nature of the vapour that poisons him? Does he pant to die instructed? Can he not pledge his honour, in consideration of his wages, without mischievously inquiring into the moral responsibilities of civilised man?

At the present moment, the privileges of the Linen-Draper’s Assistant are many. He is allowed, in his own person, to work

a most interesting experiment ; namely, to prove upon how little it is possible for a young man to wear a good coat and white linen. The journeyman bricklayer may beat him at wages, but he must beat, if possible, the man of independence, in the fineness of his apparel. It has been stated to us that, at this moment, there is a conspiracy among the shopmen in a certain West-end house, to outdress an illustrious Count ; and, sinking the shirt-studs, it is thought that one Assistant has already achieved the undertaking !

Next, for time : we know it to be the custom of many establishments to give at least one whole hour per diem to the shopmen, for needful recreation of limb and abstraction of thought from the pressing demands of business. One whole hour ! Now we very much doubt if any patriotic prime minister, with the good of his country thumping at his heart, could ever boast of so much positive leisure in the whole livelong day.

We have thought it due to the interests of the world at large, to dwell thus at length on the present movement of the Linen-Drapers' Assistants ; for we see, in the success of their struggle, the beginning of an utter change in our whole condition. Let it be granted, that the linen-drapers succeed in their demand for leisure—in their cry for time to unroll their minds, to see of what stuff and pattern they are composed ; let us allow that they have obtained their end : well, does any reasonable tradesman suppose that the evil is finished ? Certainly not. What, then, is the next calamity ? Why—yes—absolutely—

“ We see, as from a tow'r, the end of all ! ”—

we behold the fluttering of ribands—the waving of handkerchiefs ; we see the milliners' girls in wild rebellion ! They, too, cry for leisure !

The result of all this is as plain as the nose in Mamma's face—the result is an utter subversion of the present principles or society.

John Bull—should the linen-drapers succeed, and after them, the milliners, and after them, whatever class chooses to march through the breach made in the outworks of trade—John Bull must undergo an utter change of character. By the way ; it was but three days since that we viewed the type of trading John Bull, in all his fulness ; and, at the risk of offending a few of the sons of John, we will tell them what it was :—

A mountain of an ox, almost crushed upon its knees by its own unnatural fat, limping through Fleet Street, triumphant from the Smithfield show—its horns decorated with sky-blue

ribands—its eyes dead as lead—its tallowy glories a burthen and a misery to it! "What a beautiful animal!" cried some of the unthinking worshippers of superabundant fat. "What a lovely ox!" exclaimed (it might be, from his looks) the purse-proud owner of thirteen drapers' shops. "What a lovely ox!" cried he, and stood to gaze. "What a nasty beast!" said we, and pushed through the crowd.

Now the John Bull of trade is but too often little more than the prize ox; an animal whose whole nature is to eat and eat, and to accumulate in its own carcase, a weight that makes it hideous. Have we not the oxen of commerce, crammed with oil-cake from the bank; with a thousand and ten thousand lean and withered feeders of the one thing, all mouth? "Well," they begin to say, "we will not for twelve hours a-day do nothing but cram this ox; let us, at least, have a little leisure to look about us, and see what the world is made of, and not pass all our lives at the meal-tub of another!" This is the present cry of the linen-draper; a cry that will sooner or later be heard from one end of the kingdom to the other; and, as the cry be unheeded or responded to, will the great mass remain mere money-diggers, or become thinking, reasoning men! A guinea is a good thing—an excellent thing; but, after all, it is not the best thing; there is a leisure that is better than gold.

To return, in conclusion, to our Linen-Draper's Assistant. There may be, among our readers, those who have felt annoyed at the perseverance with which the man has prayed them to purchase: alack! he may have had the dearest cause for his pertinacity. We will illustrate this probability by a true story:—A gentleman entered a certain shop, and was shown some article by a youth of the establishment: the article was rejected as unfit; and the stranger was about to leave, when he was earnestly entreated by the lad to "buy something." The agitated manner of the boy excited the curiosity of the customer, who begged to know why he so earnestly pressed goods that he might perceive were not required.

"I am obliged to do it, sir," said the boy. "I have nobody in the world to help me, and have to do what I can for my widowed mother: and, sir, it is a rule in *our house*, that whoever lets a person leave the shop without buying something is discharged that very night."

The gentleman, doubtful of the truth of this, inquired of the master, who could not deny the statement of his servant. Fortunately for the lad, he had appealed to one with heart and means to assist him, and he was immediately preferred to a better situation. Now this is truth!

THE DEBTOR AND CREDITOR.

WE have heard of men who would boast that they "never had an hour's illness—never owed a shilling in their lives." Let us not be thought so credulous as to believe that the world abounds with such people; by no means: we hear of them with a like sense of curious wonder awakened by tidings of a spotted boy,—the horned woman,—the pig-faced lady, or any other human marvel that nature, in her sport or idleness, deems good to send among us. The man who has never known sickness has, we fear, a very irreverential notion of the delicacy, the subtleties of his anatomy; and, with a certain senatorial philanthropist, may question the wise utility of hospitals. The man who has never owed a shilling cannot, we opine, have a just apprehension of the horrors of debt, and may look on prison walls with a deep and sweet conviction of their social worth and excellence. These people, however—the sacred few exempt from the apothecary and the attorney—are the precious babes of Fortune; dipped, heels and all, in Styx; powdered with gold, and swathed in finest linen. Our purpose is not with them; it is enough that we have glanced at their strange existence; that we have pointed at these monsters of felicity—these paragons of luck. The comprehensiveness of our theme embraces the whole world; for where, where is the man who, though he may never have had an hour's illness, has, at the same time, never owed a shilling?—where, where the man equally exempt from rhubarb and from writs?

It is, we hope, obvious that our present paper touches only the Debtor and Creditor as flourishing under the British constitution. We speak only of national evils and national remedies. Every land has, we believe, its own mode of recovery; in every nation, the Debtor meets with a peculiar attention; the Creditor, in the pursuit of his claim, conforming to the legislative genius of his maternal country. We would not, were we sufficiently scholarly, enumerate the different modes of different nations, detaining the

reader with a description of the thousand various processes to which the Debtor is subjected, in order to make him satisfy his lordly master ; for, be sure of it, the Debtor, let him hold up his head and ruffle it as he will, is the bondman—the serf of the Creditor. We will not attempt a circumnavigation of the globe, to show how Carib recovers of Carib ; by what refined process the Patagonian is compelled to disgorge to his fellow ; or how the men of Labrador recover of one another. This is a theme too vast and comprehensive for our purpose. We will take it for granted that, in some barbarian lands, the Debtor is doomed to servitude ; in some, he suffers mutilation ; in some, he is impaled ; in some, branded. We will not dispute the stories of travellers who have printed as much. In England, Hesperian soil ! the Debtor wears no slavish yoke, loses no limb, is fixed on no stake, bears no ignominious impress. No, in this our happy country, where law is the bright babe begotten by Wisdom upon Justice, the Debtor is only—skinned alive !

The reader, of course, perceives that we speak of the Debtor *in extremis*, when reduced to the last consolations of law. It is then that we recognise the wisdom and philanthropy of British legislators, who, imitating the benevolent example of Nature that has expressly created certain food for the sustenance of meanest insects, make the offending culprit the lawful morsel of litigation—providing the Debtor as a dinner for the attorney.

How innocent, how guileless is the man who never dreams that there are cannibals in London ! Why, society is beset by anthropophagi. One cannot walk the streets without rubbing coats with men-eaters ; cannibals duly entered ; consumers of human flesh and blood according to the statutes. They are to be known to the man who reads human faces—known as truly as the family of honey-feeders is known to the naturalist. They have, for the most part, a certain cadaverous aspect,—a restless, wily, eye, with a sneaking cruelty about the lips. Some few there are with full, rosy faces, and sleek, satin skins,—a plethoric variety of the race. And these have, times out of mind, fed upon the Debtor, duly provided for them by gracious law-givers. Like the ogre of our childhood, they have

“ Ground his bones to make their bread.”

The Debtor is, therefore, to be considered as he exists in himself, and as he lives for his consumers. He is, in the strongest and most significant sense, a national portrait ; for in his person, and in his experiences, are illustrated the social excellences of legislation. As a kitten suffering in an air-pump, or a dog with its *arteries* laid bare by the knife of the speculative anatomist,

illustrates a certain principle in science, so does the Debtor, in the fangs of the sharp attorney, illustrate the delegated wisdom of the community. He proves the ignominy of poverty. The varlet who steals "some eightpenny matter," is sentenced to be whipped ! the wretch who owes forty shillings is handed over to the attorney, who, the appointed officer to punish the iniquity of death, in a trice doubles the amount, thus justly punishing the pauperism of the pauper. The hangman flourishes his whip ; the attorney scourges with costs.

The philosophy of the law of Debtor and Creditor demonstrates that to be poor is to be punishable. Hence, certain instruments—not, indeed, the thumb-screw, the rack, or the strapado, but engines almost equally sanguinary—have been invented, and placed at the will of the legal executioner, wherewith, for his own especial advantage, he may torture the offender. It is not the Creditor for whom the law has shown its most paternal care, but the lawyer. It is not justice that is to be vindicated, but litigation that is to be gorged. It is to this wise and goodly end that costs are not limited to shillings, but swollen to pounds. Justice might, indeed, be cheaply satisfied ; but the attorney has a maw insatiate. Again, to make justices cheap would doubtless make her contemptible : she is, therefore, dignified by expense ; made glorious by the greatness of costs.

What a forlorn animal is the Debtor ! See him hovering about yonder door. That, reader is the office of Mr. —, a sharp practitioner ; a person who, to the utmost, avails himself of the benevolence of law-makers, and never spares the criminal in debt. It is that office,—that den of tape and parchment,—

" Where half-starved spiders prey on half-starved flies,"

that the Debtor would seek for mercy : he comes to beg for time, to supplicate that he may not be swallowed whole by law, but mercifully consumed by mouthfuls. He will sign any bond,—he will pay any costs ; all that he wants is time ; and he, therefore, with the deepest humiliation, entreats that he may only be devoured piecemeal. Look at the man, gentle reader, and shudder at debt : what self-abasement is in his mien ! what an expression of anguish darkens his face ; and now what a blush of shame ! He crawls to the door ; lingers at its step ; his eye runs down the strips of names painted at the door-post—he has read them a dozen times—to find the whereabouts of the gentleman who has sued him ; and he mounts the stairs with less alacrity than many a wretch has mounted Tyburn ladder. His debt is not of crushing amount ; he could, in a little time, satisfy his Creditor ; but then the costs have doubled the sum, and how

to appease the lawyer? Well, the attorney has relenting bowels: yes, for see with what a gladdened face, with what lightened step, the Debtor, after half an hour's delay, descends the stairs, having, as he for the time believes, comfortably settled everything. Yea, he has signed a certain instrument, another wicked profit to the attorney, and he is graciously permitted to linger on to the exclusive profit of the compassionate lawyer. The Debtor owed five pounds, and with a benignity highly honourable to the professional philanthropist, he has been allowed a certain number of weeks to pay ten.

With what a mixture of pity and disdain do we contemplate the idols of the heathen! How we at once mourn and marvel the darkness, the self-abasement of poor human nature, making its offerings of blood and violence at the shrine of superstition. We, who shrug our shoulders at Mumbo Jumbo; we, who turn with loathing from the blue monkey; we, who in the self-glorification of reason, in the pride and fulness of civilisation, laugh and spit at the ape with the golden tooth; alas! have we no idols? have we set up no fantastic image worship? have we erected no Moloch, to the profit of its high priests, and the suffering of thousands? Have we built up no idol, that with the mask of an angel has the claws of a harpy? Have we no shrine, at which multitudes, gathered in the name of justice, are despoiled and stripped by the murmuring priesthood of the law? Do we call for no offerings to ignorance, and craft, and legal lying? And by a strange and wicked superstition, do men not band themselves together to perpetuate the ill—to keep up the guilty farce acted in the outraged name of reason—to do the grossest wrong in the name of public right? Let him who would call this a rhapsody take his station at an inn of Court; let him watch the priesthood, glossy as ravens; let him mark the anxious faces, the distracted looks of the daily scores who do bleeding sacrifice to them. Let the unbeliever read the Debtor's bill of costs; and when he has marked the prices of the articles issued in the name of justice, let him conscientiously make answer, if crape and pistols, though most dangerous and ignominious, are, in very truth, the most dishonest instruments employed by reasoning man.

Do we blame the attorney? Do we condemn meek Mr. Lambsheart, of Chancery Lane, with his country-house and pinery in Maida Vale? Do we cast invective upon him, who has lived and grown sleek and rich upon the very marrow of the Debtor? By no means: we would as soon think of chiding a crow for feeding upon carrion. "The law allows it." He has been the child, the *nursling* of the system. To him, for thirty years, parchment has

been daily bread ; he is only just as bad as the law enables him to be, but is ready to be worse with any alteration of the statutes. This is merely human nature ; and even Mr. Lambsheart, though a sharp attorney, is a reasoning animal, an excellent judge of port wine, and, indeed, in many other respects, a man.

We have considered the Debtor in what the state evidently considers to be his most important relation ; as, in fact, so much food for the law : as a thing to be eaten clean up, if he be a very poor and small Debtor ; or to be taken, as we have already inferred, mouthful by mouthful, according to the natural benignity of the priests of the mystery. We have next to consider him as in the immediate thrall of the Creditor, before delivered over to the mercies of sharp or gentle practice. And here we would fain set ourselves right with the reader, lest he should conceive that we hold every Debtor to be a person of interest, an unfortunate creature, calling loudly for our best sympathies. Some there are to whom debt seems their natural element ; they appear to swim only in hot water. To owe and to live, are, to them, terms synonymous ; the ledger is their *libro d'oro* ; the call of the sheriff no more than the call of a friend. There are Debtors who, for their reckless sins, deserve flaying at the hands of law ; but in the daily skinning that takes place, there is, unhappily, no distinction—there can be none. The law makes *all* eels that come to net, and all are flayed under one sentence.

There was Jack Brassly. We verily believe that his first debt commenced in his fourth year, for marbles. Certain it is, that the disease had attacked him when very young, and clung, increasing, to him through a long and various life. Yet, how airily would he plunge into debt ! In the enlargement of his heart, he looked upon all mankind as brothers, and therefore never hesitated to put in a fraternal claim to a portion of their goods and chattels. The world, however—hard-hearted world !—did not reciprocate the kindly feeling of Jack ; hence, he became known to every bailiff in London, and could, we honestly believe, give the exact dimensions of every sponging-house in the bills of mortality. What a sight was it to see Jack in prison ! How loftily, yet withal, how graciously, he suffered durance. Sir Thomas More and Sir Walter Raleigh in the Tower, let them have braved it as they might, must have been sneak-ups to Jack. With what a majestic condescension would he address the menials of the gaol ! The very pot-boy felt elevated. Guileless youth ! Was it for nothing, think ye, that Jack Brassly pitched his silveriest tones to the carrier of malt ? The coalman, a very Caliban, stood, with open mouth, fascinated by the dulcet voice and honeyed smile of Brassly ; and, the third

half-bushel shot into the cupboard, departed, still unpaid. As for the laundress, week after week did Brassly smile away her lengthy bill; still the woman continued to wash, albeit, in her own equivocal words, "there was no end to Mr. Brassly's shirts." It was thus Jack wound himself about the heart of man and woman: everybody trusted him; he paid nobody, yet everybody conspired to declare that he was such a gentleman! Let it be confessed, no man better understood the graces of life; no man was more fully impressed with the necessary dignity of a dinner. He had been in gaol two months. A friend called, and, to his surprise, found Jack considerably agitated. "Bless me, Brassly! what's the matter? any new trouble?" "Very much annoyed, indeed," answered Jack. "I see how it is; a new creditor, I suppose has"—"Not at all," interrupted Brassly; "creditor—pooh!—creditor!" "Well then," cried the friend, preparing himself for the worst, "put me out of suspense; what is it?" Brassly, after an effort, and laying his hand on the arm of his friend, began his tale. "You see, my dear fellow, I am going up to-morrow; I shall be out the next day." "Perhaps," observed the friend, "if Dodgby, and Winkman, and Cramp,—"
"Oh, I have renewed all their bills," said Brassly; "they have withdrawn their opposition, and I shall be sure to be out; but to the matter." "Aye, the cause of your anxiety; what is it?" "Before I went out, I wished to have a few friends to dine with me; there's fourteen of 'em—kind souls!—coming; I have a pretty little summer banquet; but what annoys me past expression, is this; although I have sent a mile about the neighbourhood—yes, at least a mile——"
"Well?" "I can't—offer what money I will—get any ice-powders for the wine." Poor Brassly!

Everybody persisted in calling Brassly a gentleman; and we will do him the justice to avow, that let his difficulties be what they might, he never forgot the reputation thus forced upon him. He never condescended to any plebeian usage, if, by any opportunity, he could obtain the means of passing gentility. "My dear Frampton, it was Providence that sent you in my path," cried Brassly, addressing a portly gentleman in the street, squeezing his hand, and then looking with sorrowful eyes and depressed mouth into his face. "What's the matter, Brassly?" For some seconds, Brassly was too much overcome to speak; at length, he cried, "For heaven's sake, lend me a sovereign!"

"A sovereign!"

"A sovereign. I have not a penny in the world—I cannot tell you know; you shall know all some day; but I have a pressing (pressing, did I say?) nay, a sacred, a holy call for a sovereign. A shilling less will not do; it must be a sovereign."

"Well," said Frampton, with the face and air of a man to whom the incident was not altogether new; "well;" and he slowly drew forth his purse, took out the coin, and, evidently as if bidding an eternal farewell to it, placed the money in the hand of Brassly. "There it is," said Frampton, with great Christian resignation.

"Thank you," mildly replied Brassly; "much obliged to you. Here"—and to the consternation of Frampton, he saw Brassly lift his finger—heard him raise his voice:—"Here, cab!" The charioteer drove his cab to the kerb, and Brassly, not having a penny in the world except the sovereign, for every farthing of which he had a sacred, a holy use, was, bowing and smiling graciously to the lender, whirled away!

Years passed, and Brassly became the borrower of shillings; nevertheless, his strong sense of all the proprieties of a dinner remained with him; that, with all his losses, continued to dignify his squalor. With Brassly, there was only one snuff shop in London, only one butcher, only one vendor of oysters, and so forth. This prejudice even the bitterest poverty failed to cure in him. There were, to be sure, thousands of retailers of snuff and tobacco, thousands who cut up sheep and oxen, thousands who dealt in shell-fish; yet to Brassly there was but one of each: the snuff of all others was fiery dust; the mutton, tasteless; the oysters, poisonous. Beautifully did Brassly illustrate this, his potent belief. He had borrowed ten shillings;—he was living at the time in a wretched nook in the suburbs of the town, with wife and five children. Ten shillings!—and there was promise of a dinner. Airily did Brassly sally forth to purchase that, to a starving family, delicious luxury. A long walk lay before him; yes, it was two miles at least to the shop of Mr. —, the only butcher in London. Brassly entered the shop; after much pondering, made purchase of a most sapid leg of mutton; and then (for Brassly was a gentleman, and could not be seen in the company of a leg of mutton in the public street), with one of the only legs in London, took his seat in a hackney-coach, and drove, in "measureless content," to his alley home. He alighted at his door; and, having paid ready money for the mutton (a virtue he was wont to dwell upon when promissory payment was out of the case), having settled the fare of the coachman, Brassly congratulated himself on the wise economy of his dealing; for he had absolutely saved from the borrowed ten shillings sixpence-halfpenny for potatoes! Brassly lived and died a Debtor. But it is not for the large family of the Brasslys that we ask the sympathy of the reader.

Of what a hideous progeny of ill is debt the father! What

lies, what meanness, what invasions on self-respect, what cares, what double-dealing ! How, in due season, it will carve the frank, open face into wrinkles ; how, like a knife, 'twill stab the honest heart. And then, its transformations ! How it has been known to change a goodly face into a mask of brass ; how, with the "damned custom" of debt, has the true man become a callous trickster ! A freedom from debt, and what nourishing sweetness may be found in cold water ; what toothsome-ness in a dry crust ; what ambrosial nourishment in a hard egg ! Be sure of it, he who dines out of debt, though his meal be biscuit and an onion, dines in "The Apollo." And then for raiment : what warmth in a threadbare coat, if the tailor's receipt be in the pocket ; what Tyrian purple in the faded waistcoat, the vest not owed for ; how glossy the well-worn hat, if it cover not the aching head of a Debtor ! Next, the home-sweets, the out-door recreation of the free man. The street-door knocker falls not a knell on *his* heart ; the foot on the staircase, though he live on the third-pair, sends no spasm through *his* anatomy ; at the rap at his door, he can crow forth "come in," and his pulse still beat healthfully, his heart sink not in his bowels. See him abroad. How confidently, yet how pleasantly, he takes the street ; how he returns look for look with any passenger ; how he saunters ; how, meeting an acquaintance, he stands and gossips ! But, then, this man knows not debt ; debt, that casts a drug into the richest wine ; that makes the food of the gods unwholesome, indigestible ; that sprinkles the banquets of a Lucullus with ashes, and droops soot in the soup of an emperor : debt, that, like the moth, makes valueless furs and velvets, enclosing the wearer in a festering prison (the shirt of Nessus was a shirt not paid for) : debt, that writes upon frescoed walls the handwriting of the attorney ; that puts a voice of terror in the knocker ; that makes the heart quake at the haunted fire-side : debt, the invisible demon that walks abroad with a man ; now quickening his steps, now making him look on all sides like a hunted beast, and now bringing to his face the ashy hue of death, as the unconscious passenger looks glancingly upon him ! Poverty is a bitter draught, yet may, and sometimes with advantage, be gulped down. Though the drinker make wry faces, there may, after all, be a wholesome goodness in the cup. But debt, however courteously it be offered, is the cup of a syren, and the wine, spiced and delicious though it be, an eating poison. The man out of debt, though with a flaw in his jerkin, a crack in his shoe-leather, and a hole in his hat, is still the son of liberty free as the singing-lark above him ; but the Debtor, though clothed in the utmost bravery, what is he but a serf out upon a

holiday—a slave to be reclaimed at any instant by his owner the Creditor ?

My son, if poor, see wine in the running spring ; let thy mouth water at a last week's roll ; think a threadbare coat the "only wear ;" and acknowledge a whitewashed garret fittest housing-place for a gentleman. Do this, and flee debt. So shall thy heart be at peace, and the sheriff be confounded.

We have now to speak of the Creditor ; and, having read what might well be termed "The Handbook of Debt,"* we can scarcely sufficiently express our admiration at the nice positions of Debtor and Creditor therein set down. Through the great public spirit of the bookseller, the Creditor may cheaply arm himself at all points against the Debtor ; whilst, with a humanity no less distinguished than the aforesaid public spirit, it is also shown to the Debtor by what means he may make his best defence against what we must always consider our natural enemies, the men to whom we owe money. Many and beautiful are the tricks and sleights of law ; delicate, exquisitely subtle, the cobwebs, the fine, reticulated work of senators, shown and displayed in that small yet most significant volume. Having laid every page of it to our enlightened heart, we must confess that the law seems most especially solicitous for the interests of persons too frequently regardless of themselves. How often is the Creditor a self-doomed victim ! How often, here in gorgeous London,

"Cette ville, pleine d'or et de misère,"

how often do we find the willing sufferer, pranked in smiles, all self-complacency and condescension, yearning to be robbed—yea, absolutely wooing destruction ? "I pray ye, take my goods ; let me have thy name in my ledger ; make me happy—be thou my Debtor !" How often does it demand a stoicism hardly to be expected since the days of sour-faced Cato, to be deaf to the appeal of the tradesmen ! How many young gentlemen, with nothing but their wits—poor destitute fellows !—have been forced into debt by the cordial manner, the gracious words of the man determined to be a Creditor !

In the present day, debt is made particularly easy to the lowest capacity. It is—we are convinced of the fact—this delightful facility of credit that has ruined thousands of fine spirited young fellows, who never had a penny to peril. Let us consult those social chronicles—those histories of daily life—the newspapers, and we must inevitably come to the conclusion that your London shopkeeper is the most ingenuous—the most

* See "Handbook of the Law of Debtor and Creditor."

simple-hearted—the most innocent of mankind. Can there be a more powerful, a more beautiful evidence of the philanthropic confidence of human nature, than that every day exhibited by the fashionable London tradesman? What practical benevolence is constantly displayed by the tailor, who, with the vaguest notions of the station and means of his customer—provided the future Debtor come to him in a coat of unexceptionable character—clothes the son of Adam from the shoulders to the heels! He, the tailor—the future despised, abused Creditor—puts no prying query, hesitates no frigid doubt; but with a sweet alacrity pleasant to behold, and grateful to contemplate, measures his man, and is forthwith doomed! Nevertheless, is not this a pleasing picture? To the libellous, carking cynic, who sneers and spits at human nature, should not this be a lesson of charity—a great moral teaching? Here is practical philanthropy—here the kindest operation of the social virtues; when a man—his face steeped with satisfaction, his words words of honey, and his whole demeanour that of subdued felicity—straightway gives a portion of his goods to the stranger within his parlour; to a man he has never seen before, and whom it is more than likely he may never see or hear of again.

“Good heavens!” exclaimed Mr. Rigid, a most punctilious gentleman—a man of all the proprieties, that of ready money included—“Good heavens, Augustus! why, yes—you have only been a twelvemonth in London, and you already owe three thousand pounds. Explain, sir—how came this about? Explain, sir; I command you.”

“Only three thousand?” asked young Rigid.

“Only! and how dare you owe so much—how dare you get into debt?”

“Upon my soul, father,” answered Augustus, “I couldn’t help it;—it was so *devilish easy*!”

Many a fine young fellow, condemned to the limited area of St. George’s Fields, has bitter cause of complaint against the Creditor; whose innocence, whose unsuspecting nature, and unsophisticated determination to become what he is, has compelled the young gentleman to take advantage of suffering goodness; the temptation was too strong for the resolution of youth, and the willing tradesman became a Creditor. If the reader conceive that we paint the Creditor in too amiable colours; if he doubt the exceeding benevolence of fashionable tradesmen towards the dashing destitute, let him wear out a day or so in any office of police, and have his soul instructed. He will there perceive that of all animals the fashionable tradesman, the incipient Creditor, is easiest to be taken: no

eider-duck suffers itself to be despoiled of its down with less resistance.

However, ere we quit the fashionable tradesman, we must do this justice to his natural and improved acuteness. He is not to be taken by shabby appearance. He is a fish that bites only at the finest flies. It is, therefore, highly essential that the would-be Debtor should appear before him bearing all the external advantages of Mammon. Then will the tradesman open his books to the stranger, and rejoice in his orders.

As a man is known by his associates, so we think may the character of the Creditor be known by his attorney: the sharp employ the sharp.

Mr. Macwriggle (we write a bit of real life) was a small tradesman, and had given credit to John Junks; the debt was demanded, sued for, and resisted. The cause came into court, and Macwriggle, for once having full justice on his side, was flushed with the confidence of victory. Already he felt the amount of the bill jingling in his pocket. Evidence was called to prove the delivery of the goods: nothing could be more plain—the delivery was certain: but what was the astonishment of Mr. Macwriggle to find witnesses in the box who, without prevarication, swore to being present at the payment of Junks's bill; Macwriggle having solemnly promised to forward a receipt for the same! Macwriggle passed with the world for a religious man; therefore, thinking of his bill and costs, he stood in a cold sweat listening to the perjury of his fellow-creatures. The cause was soon over—verdict for the defendant. Mr. Crooks was the adroit attorney for John Junks; and it was about eleven o'clock on the morning following the trial, when Mr. Crooks, seated in all legal serenity in his private room, was visited by the hapless plaintiff, Andrew Macwriggle.

"Your name is just Crooks?" asked Macwriggle, and the attorney, with slight dignity, bowed.

"My name is Macwriggle;" and the bearer of the name paused.

"Oh! indeed," observed Mr. Crooks.

"It appears, sir, that you were the attorney in the case of that infernal scoundrel——"

"I beg your pardon, sir," said Crooks, "I know no scoundrels as clients."

"No matter for that," said Andrew, "you acted for John Junks?"

"I had that honour," replied Crooks.

Macwriggle advanced into the middle of the room, and clenching his fist, and casting his eyes towards a top row of "The

Abridgment of the Statutes," he began, almost at a scream,—
"If there was ever a scoundrel, if there was ever a villain—a thief—a pickpocket——"

"Really, sir," said Crooks, rather uncertain as to whom Macwriggle applied the epithets, and not quite convinced that Andrew had not a horsewhip under his coat, "I cannot suffer this abuse. I insist, Mr. Macwriggle——"

"But no, sir," said Andrew, in a composed tone, and smiling, "that's not what I came for. Mr. Crooks, you were the attorney for Junks; you conducted his case; you know how it was got up."

"I conducted his case," said Mr. Crooks; "and what, sir, do you wish to say to me?"

"This, sir," answered Macwriggle; "that you're just the very man I've been looking for all my life: here's all my papers—all my business: for the man who could get off Junks, is the very man for Andrew Macwriggle's attorney."

We have said it; the sharp employ the sharp. Verily, a man is known by his attorney.

THE "LION" OF A PARTY.

A SUBTLE Italian, no less a man than the Count Pecchio, has called London "the grave of great reputations." In simple, prosaic phrase, this, our glorious metropolis is—a vast cemetery for "Lions!" They are whelped every season; and, frail and evanescent as buttercups, they every season die: that is, they do not die body and bones, but have a most cutaneous and depilatory disorder—a mortality that goes skin-deep, and little more—a disease that strips them of their hide, and tail, and mane; yea, that makes the very "Lions" that, but a few months since, shook whole coteries with the thunder of their voices, roar as "gently as any sucking doves." The ferocious dignity of the "Lion" in fine condition—the grimness of his smile—the lashing might of his muscular tail—all the grand and terrible attributes of the leonine nature pass away with the season—he is no longer a thing of wonder, a marvellously-gifted creature, at which

"——the boldest hold their breath,
For a time,"

but a mere biped—simply, a human animal—a man, and nothing more! He walks and talks unwatched amid a crowd; and spinsters who, but a year before, would have scarcely suppressed "a short, shrill shriek" at his approach, let him pass with an easy and familiar nod—it may be, even with a nod of patronage: or, if it happen that they remember his merits of the past season, they speak of them with the same philosophical coldness with which they would touch upon the tail and ears of a long-departed spaniel.

It is a sad thing for a "Lion" to outlive his majesty; to survive his nobler attributes,—it may be, lost to him in the very prime of life, thus leaving him bereft of all life's graces. And yet, how many men—"Lions" once, with flowing manes, and tails of wondrous length and strength—have almost survived even the recollection of their leonine greatness, and, conforming

to the meekness and sobriety of tame humanity, might pass for nobodies.

Being desirous of furnishing the reader with the most full and particular account of the growth and death of the "Lion" of a Party, from the earliest appearance of his mane—from the first note of promissory thunder in his voice—carrying him through the affecting glories of his too short triumph, until every hair fell from his sinewy neck, his voice broke, and his tail—a thing that had been admired by countesses—was thin, and limp as any thread-paper: being, indeed, most anxious to lay before the reader a truly philosophical account of the emotions of the "Lion," varying with his rise and fall, we wrote a letter, explanatory of our object, to a gentleman—now a clergyman, late a "Lion"—in every way qualified to instruct and delight the reader on the important theme; and beg leave, on the part of our subscribers and ourselves, to acknowledge the spirit of courtesy and promptitude manifested in the subjoined communication—as we conceive, the very model of an epistle, albeit the publisher has his own opinion on the style of its conclusion:—

TO THE EDITOR OF "HEADS OF THE PEOPLE."

"SATANSFIELD, Nov. 5, 1838.

Mr. Editor—In reply to your flattering communication, I have to announce to you my readiness to serve you, and instruct your very numerous readers, on the terms herein subscribed; and shall, of course, consider the insertion of this letter in your inestimable publication—(I have not yet seen the first number, it having unluckily fallen into the hands of Lambskin, a most respectable attorney of this village, who, in a fit of indignation, consigned it to the flames, for, as he said, "the unprovoked, unprincipled, and atrocious libel contained in 'The Lawyer's Clerk,' on a profession involving the dearest interests of mankind—a profession that, &c. &c. &c.")—I shall, I say, consider the insertion of this letter as an acquiescence in what I trust will appear a very trifling remuneration, which, *as the money is to be expended on charitable objects, it will, I trust, be forwarded to me as above without one minute's delay.**

* We may be wrong; our memory may deceive us; but when we were sub-sub sub-editor to "The Gimcrack," the fashionable annual, which admitted no contributor under the rank of baronet, we think—we are pretty sure—we could almost swear—nay, we are ready to take our oath—that we have seen, generally in the form of postscript, the *very words* put in emphatic italic by our contributor from Satansfield, in the maiden blush notes, of at least three of the nobility—the literary props and jewels

To begin my history :—

I have been a "Lion;" have been taken "among ladies"—have "aggravated my voice"—have had my mane curled—my tail-knot decorated—my hide made sleek—my teeth filed—my nails sharpened—and have stood amidst a "party" as stands the portrait—(with a proof of which you have kindly favoured me)—to these my confessions.

Never shall I forget my sensations as I gradually changed from nobody to somebody—from mere John Nokes, to "Nokes, the author of —!"

How I rejoiced at the loss of "Mr.!" I was "Nokes!" In simple and expressive oneness—"Nokes!" I no longer owed anything to the courtesy of life—to the cheap civilities of society—I had sloughed the common title bestowed on the "great vulgar and the small," and was purely and greatly "Nokes."

"Shakspeare," "Dryden," "Pope,"—"Nokes!"

I was astounded at the discoveries of my admirers. I found by all the reviews, that I "had the grace, the vigour of —, without the coarseness of —;"—"the imagination of —, but with no touch of the profanity of —;" "that though — had succeeded in depicting certain emotions, not even he, no, not even —, with all his genius, had flown so high a flight as the inimitable Nokes." When reviewers enter into a conspiracy of praise, they do their work, it must be owned, most handsomely: in one little six months

"I had a 'Lion's' mouth, with all my tail complete."

In no less than eight reviews did I peruse these heart-delighting words, hanging like a golden fringe to the end of a satin-smooth yard of criticism :—"No library can be considered complete without it." IT—the book—MY book—the book of Nokes! What a sublime thought is this; and being so sublime, what a pity it is, that it is made so cheap! Happily for my enjoyments, I was then unconscious of its frequent application, and was therefore

of "The Gimerack." It may be charged against us, that we have, in our notice of this strange coincidence, shewn ourselves ungrateful to our late employers; who, in the very dead time of winter, with coals at one-and-ten-pence per bushel, turned us off, and only for not knowing that Sir Mufflehead Bogby was an Irish knight, and not an English baronet; as, when we had given out "his copy"—a very sweet little poem to a "London Sparrow"—to be printed next to the Countess of Dewlay's "Thoughts in an Opera-box; we had, in our limited knowledge of the baronetcy, verily believed. And for this trifling mistake we were turned away, when coals—but an honest sense of pride, and manly independence, makes us dumb.—Ed.

possessed and elevated by the comprehensiveness of the compliment, that made *me*—Nokes—essential to the refinement of generations present and to come!

"No library can be considered complete without IT!"

The Bodleian, wanting *me*, would be little more than a place for lumber—the library of the British Museum, an undigested mass of printed paper—in a word, every library on the face of the earth, with Nokes absent from its shelves, would cease to be, what Cicero has called it—the "soul of a house;" and must henceforth be considered a chaos of words and sentences.

There was, I repeat it, a conspiracy among the reviewers to lift me high, only to make my fall the greater. With a refinement of cruelty, they evidently bound themselves one to another, to face it out to all the world, that until Nokes arose, the world was in comparative darkness; but being risen, there was light indeed! From the moment that my roarings were first acknowledged, all men shrunk and dwindled; their brains lost "their cunning;" their books—written o'er and o'er with golden sentences; made beautiful with glowing scenes of life; consecrated against the tooth of time by the noblest wisdom, and the deepest truth (for all these pretty things had been said and printed of them);—were, when I drew my gray-goose Hudson, made as "nought." I dipped my pen in ink, and lo! the pages of all other men, from that moment, became blank paper. I nibbed my quill, and a hundred literary throats had mortal gashes!

Nor was this sufficient. It was not enough that all other men were slain, that I might sit upon a throne of carcasses; but the dead—the illustrious dead, as I had heard them called—were dragged from their tombs and stripped of their winding sheets, to make my robes more ample. I was crowned the King of Foolscap and the Lord of Ink!

Years have elapsed since I felt the glow—the delirium of my new-born fame. I write this "a wiser and a sadder man;" but remembering, as I do, the "Nokes" mania—I had published a poem in quarto, on—but it matters not—recollecting the "*furor Nokesius*" that—brought about by the confederacy of reviewers—afflicted the town, I am convinced—and I write this upon due deliberation, my mind happily raised above such vain distinctions, possessed, as it at present is, by domestic affections, the care of a tolerably large family, two cows, and a flock of geese—I am convinced that had I in my days of literary glory condescended to the meanness of publishing as my own composition—giving to the world as the bright-haired child of my own brain—the very beautiful, and, by the way, too much neglected old *English* ballad of "Nancy Dawson," I should not have stood in

need of benevolent critics, who would have gone up to their very elbows in ink, to make the ballad mine; and, in despite of the production of the original, have sneered it down as a contemptible slander, a venomous invention, the malignity of which was happily its own antidote.—Whilst, as a reinforcement, other generous critics would have risen up, and descanting on the graphic originality of my ballad, have advised—and in words not to be mistaken—"Shakespere and Milton to look to their laurels!" Maturely considering the indulgence shown to me, can I think otherwise? Was I not eulogised as the first poet who, seeking into the hidden recesses of resemblances, had likened a "virgin" to an ungathered flower? Was I not smeared from the crown of my head to the sole of my foot with honey, for the simile of "life" and a "river?" Had any man—it was triumphantly asked—had any poet (and it only evinced the various and sublime capabilities of poetry, observed the reviewer, that so many thousand years had passed, and that so beautiful, and yet withal so palpable an emanation of true poesy had been reserved for the present day)—had any poet struck out so touching, so original a thought?

I swallowed this—every word of it; and every syllable did me, as I thought, a world of good. I fattened upon incense—grew corpulent upon musk. The evil hour came. I was put into a room in a party, with another poet, as Brummell would have said, "damp from the wet sheets of the press;" I caught cold—fell into a rapid consumption—and was, in six months, typographically dead. I have dwelt thus long upon the cruel eulogies bestowed upon me by a brotherhood—a sworn band of critics—that the reader may judge me with charity, when shaking my mane, showing my teeth, and twisting my tail at the hundred parties, whereof I was the principal attraction; or, in more familiar phrase, the "Lion!" What an atmosphere of joy I breathed! I stood and moved with five hundred lovely eyes upon my tail; and, wherever I turned my head, I beheld smiles, and now and then heard sighs that—but no! I am now a married man.

How the women would flutter, and smile, and blush, as I approached! How would they drink my words, as they were honey-dew; how, with downcast eyes and hesitating lips, would they venture to praise my "divine poem;" and then—how would they bind me in a solemn promise "to write something—if only a line" in their albums!

Was it possible for a mere "Lion" to endure these blandishments with no change of head or heart? Was it possible to hear myself quoted—and by such lips—and remain nothing more

than Nokes? To be assured that my lines were inevitably to the end of the world household things—creatures that would perish only with the language—to be told that poetry had “received a diviner form, a higher influence—was destined to work a mightier change in the social habits of a people than could have ever been predicted for it, and all since the appearance of Nokes?” Now, such were the precise words—for they sank indelibly into my heart—conveyed to me “at a party,” by a tall gentleman in a blood-coloured satin waistcoat, embellished with gold caterpillars, who, having hunted me into a corner, and delivered himself of the above opinion, immediately put his card into my hand, and tried, but could not express the sense of honour he should feel, if I would but condescend to sit to him for Somerset House! Now, the painter with the gold caterpillars was the tenth artist who, on the evening in question, had flattered me by a like request. Eight I had already promised, and—

And here I feel it due to Mildpen—(by the way, he had never been a “Lion,” though he tried hard for the dignity: but somehow, when he strove to roar, he could rise to nothing better than whistling; and for mane and tail, they would not come kindly, do what he might)—I feel it due to Mildpen to state, that it was he who saved me from the ninth promise; for I caught his benevolent eye, and saw his expressive mouth, and I civilly refused; Mildpen congratulated me on my escape, assuring me that the man was “a vulgar dog—a pot-house artist—a fellow who knew nothing of *society*, as he piqued himself on the stern reality of his likenesses, never putting a single spoonful of sugar into his colours, but painting authors just as they were. Now, in the hands of Honeybrush—the gold-caterpillar artist—you are safe; he, depend upon it, will treat you like a gentleman.” With this assurance I sat to Honeybrush; and am bound to say, that he turned me out of hand in a very satisfactory condition. He painted me with a military cloak slipping off my shoulders—most literary lions were then painted in military cloaks, as if at their leisure hours they were majors of cavalry—my hand, with ten rings upon it, supporting my head—my forehead an enormous piece of white paint, and my eyes fixed upon a star, poetically placed in the corner of the picture within an inch of the frame. I was seated on a rock, with a very handsome ink-stand beside me, and my right hand grasping, as if in a spasm of inspiration, an eagle’s feather! Altogether I made a very pretty show; though a contemptible critic—after my leonine death—declared the picture to be an ingenious mixture of the seraph and the man-milliner.

It would, probably, Mr. Editor, lead me beyond your prescribed limits, were I to touch upon all the portraits painted of me in my roaring state. It may be sufficient for me to observe, that the artists have caught me in every possible variety of attitude and expression: cross-legged—leaning—sprawling—with arms folded and arms a-kimbo—contemplative—smiling—sneering; and, for the admirers of the sublime and dignified, according to Dryden—

"I looked a 'Lion' with a gloomy stare,
And o'er my forehead hung my matted hair!"

This last portrait, I am happy to state, was hung so high, and in so dark a corner, that very few ladies knew of its existence.*

However, to quit the pictorial theme, which I resign with renewed acknowledgment of the kindness of Mildpen, a really fine fellow—at the present moment, I am told, editing "The Weekly Thunderbolt," in Penzance—an excellent fellow, for it was he, who, on our return from a party in Fitzroy Square, in a moment of high excitement, pointed out to me the shop (the only shop in London) in Tottenham Court Road, where white kid gloves were cleaned at only threepence per pair; white kid gloves being, in my days, a more exclusive wear than at present: a most expensive article of dress too, for mere literary "Lions," for I know not how others have suffered, but I never took mine off at any party, that I did not lose at least one of them.†

I have endeavoured to describe my sensations as my leonine nature came upon me; I have now—and I shall as briefly as possible touch upon the distressing theme—to speak of my feelings as I again felt myself falling back to mere man. My fate is, however, the fate of all "Lions."

* Should Mrs. Nokes wish to possess this painting, we are happy to inform her, that it is now on sale, dog-cheap, at the left-hand corner shop of Broker's Row, Hanover Street, Long Acre; we saw it only yesterday.—ED.

† Mr. Nokes will regret to hear that the worthy individual who kept this most convenient establishment—we knew it well—has since been bankrupt. Mr. Nokes alludes to his losses of kid gloves whilst a "Lion;" in the simplicity and ingenuousness of his nature, he is apparently ignorant of an astonishing but withal complimentary fact. The truth is, let a "Lion" of a Party only unglove himself, and the women—we have seen them do it—steal the kids. The pretty enthusiasts *will* have a relic of "the wonderful creature," and thus commit a theft, which even the sufferer must, as we have observed, allow to be very complimentary. How courageous are women when they really admire! To seize a piece of kid from the very paws of a "Lion."

I was in the strength of my reputation, when Huggins the great poet and romance writer arose.

"We met—'twas in a crowd ;"

but I saw the women hanging round him—all the ten artists, nine of whom had *done* me, watching him to catch him for "Somerset House"—a fashionable publisher (turning his back to *me*) glaring at Huggins, as if he would have looked into his very bowels for "copy,"—and two editors of rival magazines (their backs to *me*) smiling graciously on what I felt to be *the* "Lion" or the night.

I retired early from the scene ; and never—never shall I forget the cool insolence with which one of my former worshippers, a beautiful girl, who had already appeared in one of the handsomest of the annuals, met me retreating to the door, and with her eye on Huggins, and half-turning her back to me, she cried, "What ! going ? good-bye."

I went home, suspecting, nay, more than suspecting, my fallen condition. The fact, however, was put beyond a doubt, when in the next number of "The Annihilator," I read the following passage—a passage taken from fifty eulogies redolent of incense. The words were as follow :—

"To say that Huggins has risen beyond all former poets in the portraiture of men and things is to say nothing ; as he has surpassed all men, so will no man ever surpass him. In a word, he has all the grandeur (and ten times more) of Nokes, *without* one particle of his weakness !"

That "*without* !" My fate was sealed ; from that moment my mane came off by handful !

The "weakness of Nokes !" I who had been quoted — lauded for energy — superhuman power — but it matters not ! Had I malice, the evil passion would be more than satisfied, for, in a year or two afterwards, I perceived in "The Annihilator," the following gratifying intelligence :—

"For Slopkin—the new star that has risen in the firmament of literature—it may be truly said of him, that he has more than all the vigour of Huggins, without his poverty of expression."

And what is Slopkin now ? No "Lion," but Bottom the weaver. Another "Lion" came with a "*without*" a something of Slopkin, and lo, Slopkin is now mere mortal man.

I retired from London in disgust ; having, however, had the satisfaction of seeing myself bound in sheep for the use of schools —went to college—entered the church, and here I am in the *parish* of Satansfield, on the limited income of two hundred

pounds per annum, house-rent, coals, and candles, included ; no "Lion," but an unshaken pillar of Protestant ascendancy,—please to direct ——— to immediately forward me the thirty pounds for this article, and believe me yours, truly and affectionately,

JOHN NOKES.

We will add nothing to the "confessions" of the late "Lion :"—they shall stand unmixed "with baser matter."

THE COCKNEY.

"My lot might have been that of a slave, a savage, or a peasant," says the grateful Gibbon; "nor can I reflect without pleasure on the bounty of Nature, which cast my birth in a free and civilised country, in an age of science and philosophy, in a family of honourable rank, and decently endowed with the gifts of fortune." In his heart, the true Cockney has a kindred gratitude to that of the author of "The Rise and Fall," though it may happen he shall never express it; nay, shall be almost ignorant of its existence. Yet, notwithstanding, it is the unknown cause of his self-complacency, the hidden source of his pride, the reason of his compassionate consideration of the original deficiencies of his rustic brethren. He might have been born at the Land's-End; he might have spoken broad Cornish; he might have never seen St. Paul's Church, or the wax-work in Westminster Abbey. Hence, in the meaning of the classic historian, he must have been a slave, a savage, or a peasant. He is, however, none of these — but a cockney; and therefore a person, to his own satisfaction at least, conversant with all London science and philosophy; and, by virtue of such advantage, justified in the wickedness of his jokes upon bacon, smock-frocks, and hob-nails.

We believe that, despite much antiquarian research, the term Cockney has never been satisfactorily traced to its origin. Should we regret this? No; we ought rather to rejoice that what has been familiarised by — shall we say, contempt — is indeed of an antiquity

"Mysteriously remote and high."

The Cockney, like the forty centuries apostrophised by Bonaparte, may, from the height of time, look down upon the present fleeting generation. Whence Cockney? *Unde derivatur?* Antiquarians have dreamt dreams about it; have, indeed, written their pages in sand: but we have nothing certain — nothing to

quench curiosity thirsting for a draught of truth. With these premises, we may safely touch upon the fables imagined by the ingenious men who have, as we think, vainly sought to bring the Cockney from the dim realm of shadows into "the light of common day."*

The Cockney has, within the last half century, declined from his importance in the eyes of his rustic brethren. When London was to York a city almost as mysterious as Timbuctoo, the

* One historian relates, that a gentle dweller in London, having incautiously wandered at least three miles from Bow Church, was suddenly astonished by the crowing of a cock. In the artificial life in which he had passed his early days, he had, of course, never listened to the clarion of Chanticleer; he had only seen him smoking in the dish, or exposed to the critical thumb and finger of chaffering housewives in the Poultry. Hence, our Londoner, when somewhat recovered from his astonishment, exclaimed, "the cock *neighs*!" From this, the antiquarian, with an ingenious boldness not uncommon with his tribe, has declared the word Cockney a word of reproach—a blot—a shame—a brand; a nick-name illustrative of the grossest ignorance of the susceptible and astute citizens of London. We should not have spoken of this antiquarian morsel, considering it as merely a thing for the nursery, were not trifles of a like consistency every day made up by commentators and glossary mongers, to be swallowed by men.

Chaucer, in his "Canterbury Tales," makes John, the gamesome clerk, say—

"I shall be holden a daffe or a *cokenay*;"

a fool, a cokenay—using the term as one of foulest reproach for a man of sense; upon which Mr. Tyrrwhit expressed his belief that it is a term of contempt borrowed originally from the kitchen. In base Latinity, *cook* is *coquinator*—hence *cokenay*, opines Mr. Tyrrwhit, is easily derived. The critic supports his opinion by a citation from Hugh Bigot:—

"Were I in my castle of Bungay,
Upon the river of Wavenay,
I would na care for the King of *Cokeney*."

Here London is called Cokeney, in allusion to an imaginary country of idleness and luxury, anciently known by the name of *Cokaigne*, or *Cocagne*, still derived by Hickes from *coquina*, the kitchen, the place of brawn and sweetbread; a derivation that would have been most satisfactory to Rabelais himself. Hickes published a poem, "The Country of Cokaigne," probably, thinks Mr. Tyrrwhit, translated from the French, who have had the same fable among them. Boileau says,

"Paris est pour un riche un *pais de Cocagne*."

There is also a Neapolitan festival, called *La Cocagne*; and in a mock-heroic poem, in the Sicilian dialect, called *La Cuciagna Conquistata* (1674), the most noble city of Cuocagna is described as being seated on a mountain of grated cheese, and crowned with a huge cauldron of macaroni.

Cockney, in his individual character, was invested with higher and more curious attributes than are awarded to him in these days. When he was only to be approached in his metropolitan fastness, by a week's tedious journey in the quickest-going waggon; when folks, two hundred miles away, shut up their shops and made their wills ere they girded up their loins, and corded their trunks, that they might see the animal in its natural state in Fleet Street and in Bishopsgate; he was, when at length through many dangers looked upon, a creature of no small interest—no passing wonderment. His dress, his air, his look of extraordinary wisdom—all things presented him to the Arcadian from Lancashire or the county of Dorset, as a person of considerable importance. Stage-coaches were started, railroads were laid down, and Timbuctoo (we mean Cockaigne) was no longer a mysterious city, but a common rendezvous for graziers, button-makers, dairy-maids from Devon, and pitmen from Newcastle. The pavement of Bond-street, almost sacred to the shoes of the Cockney, became sacrificed by the hobnails of all the counties.

Besides the more favourable claims of the Cockney upon the curiosity and homage of Corydon, he had, in the legends told at farmers' fire-sides of his less estimable qualities, a dangerous interest in the eyes of his rustic beholder. All white-headed men, who in their youth had made one pilgrimage to London, would tell fearful histories of the wiliness of ring-droppers—of the miraculous faculty of Cockaigne pick-pockets. Hence, Lubin from Shropshire, who crawled from the waggon to Cheapside, had a new source of interest as he surveyed the gold-laced coats of the fine people about him: they might be thieves and sharpers in their working suits, and they might be only gentlemen!

And when the Cockney quitted London—yes, when he would condescend to visit his mother's relations in the wilds of Leicestershire! "My cousin from London!" Was he not a something—a bit of the great, mysterious city? Was he not shown as the very choicest and most certain sample of the great Babylon? Even as the pedant showed the one brick as the sample of the house, so was Whittington Simmons, from Lad Lane, exhibited as a veritable fragment of marvellous London. And then what humours of Cockaigne did the said Whittington Simmons put forth, to his own present glory, and to his memory for twenty years afterwards, at the rural fire-side! How the farmer laughed! And how deliciously Whittington, with a joke from the playhouse or with the last flash phrase east of the Bar, how triumphantly did he silence the unconquerable exciseman!

Why dwell upon the glories of a departed age? Why, to present mortification, touch upon the raptures of the past? What is now the Cockney in the eyes of Corydon—what London to York?

“’Tis distance lends enchantment to the view!”

And there is no distance where there is a railroad. The Cockney is no longer stared, wondered at, upon his native pavement; but unceremoniously jostled by Melibœus Mugs, from the Potteries. And then, for the Cockney’s reputation of cheat, among the pastoral swains! How rarely do we find him triumphant over the cunning of a Smithfield bullock driver? How seldom, in these common-place days, doth he drop a ring? Lastly, for the glory of his rural visits, what is the Cockney now in Staffordshire?—only to imitate the phrase of Louis XVIII., only one Englishman more. He walks the street of a country place, and is no more the object of curiosity than the town-pump. He visits the farmer’s fire-side; is he there the indomitable wit? doth he talk and jest, the wonder of some, the fear of many, and the admiration of all? Alas! it is most probable that he claims no more attention than the sides of bacon hanging about him; or, like the bacon, only keeps his place—so has the rustic won upon the Cockney—to be the further smoked. The inventors of railways have much to answer for.

However, albeit the revolution of things has lessened the importance of the Cockney in the eyes of all the world out of London, he himself remains, in his own assurance, the same clever, knowing, judicious, sprightly, witty fellow that he ever was. He knows life in all its varieties. He was born and bred in Bishopsgate Within; and for that unanswerable reason, is in no way to be cozened. He is a part and parcel of the greatest city upon earth; a piece of the very heart of the empire. The Mansion House, the Monument, and Guildhall, are to him more ancient than the pyramids. Gog and Magog, to the real Cockney, stand in the remote relation of ancestors: he is wood of their wood. Politics to him are most familiar matters; he can discuss state questions as easily as he could play at push-pin; and displace a ministry with the same readiness as, in the days of his apprenticeship, he could take down the shutters. The Court, with all its wonders, is to him no *terra incognita*: not it; for he has seen her Majesty, drawn by the cream-coloured horses, go down to Parliament; and once a week, or oftener, takes off his hat to the Queen in her rides from the palace. Hence, there is no state ceremony with which he is unacquainted; no divinity, “hedging” the royal person, which he has not, with increasing familiarity,

doffed his beaver to. In his business hours, the Cockney is worthy of the attention of any reflecting cart-horse. He is the genius of labour; the willing serf to those worse than Egyptian task-masters, "*£. s. d.*" Consider him when working for his daily bread; and man, the paragon of animals, appears a creature expressly fashioned to toil for shillings, and for—nothing more. His very soul seems absorbed in the consideration of the coin of the realm; his mind hath no greater range than that of his shop; and his every thought, like every omnibus, runs to the Bank.

But the Cockney has his festive hours, his day of pleasure; and, perhaps, his peculiar genius for pleasantry is never more characteristically exerted than at the masquerade. Here the Cockney is, indeed, in fullest feather. His animal spirits are so abundant that they, incontinently, make him knock off hats; deal body-blows; and send him playing leapfrog over the heads of his fellow revellers. If the Cockney be somewhat dull at a repartee, he has the acutest sensibility for a row; and though he shakes his ears and looks doggedly at a thrust of wit, he can, with the liveliest promptitude, make play for a black eye. These, however, are the enjoyments of his more sportive—his more youthful season. The middle-aged Cockney has severer pleasures, calm meditative hours, when his soul makes holiday from the business of the week, and spreads its wings and soars, unburdened by the weight of the shop. Sunday comes; and in tavern bower, or humbler tea-garden, with one eye upon his pipe, and the other on a bed of marigolds, the Cockney will sit and smoke, and smoke, and drink an unconsidered quantity of British brandy; and satisfactorily consider his own virtues, complacently taking for himself the very highest rank for true piety, and earnest, downright, Sabbath-keeping, above all the other sinful nations of this sinful earth. It may be, that both his tongue and his foot trip a little on his way home; and his wife, if she be with him, is not addressed in that soft, captivating strain that first won her virgin heart. It has, too, happened that, arrived in his bed-chamber, there has been some difficulty on the part of the mistress and maid in getting off the good man's boots; though, sometimes, he has imperiously waived the ceremony by insisting to go to bed in them. And what of this? hath he not spent his seventh day without whistling; without singing? Did ever the sinful wish rise within him of a fiddle? did he, like a heathenish foreigner, ever dream of a dance? No: he enjoyed himself like a Christian and an Englishman; ten pipes of tobacco, and eight glasses of very black brandy and water, making *but a small part* of his nobler recreations.

We have seen the Cockney on his own ground. He is, however, to be viewed to greater advantage when away, not from London merely, but from England. What a delicious fellow is the real Cockney in France! How delightful at the Hague! What a positive blessing is one of the true London breed on the Rhine! All his finer qualities, like Madeira, improve wonderfully by a sea-voyage. His self-importance increases with the distance from Bow church, and he lands at Calais or Boulogne, with an overwhelming sense of his nationality. He wanders up and down two or three streets, and see—he enters a shop, kept by “John Roberts, from Fish Street Hill,” to make his foreign purchases. The inn at which the Cockney puts up—it is his boast—is kept by an Englishman; the dinners are English; the waiter is English; the chambermaid is English; the boots is English; and the barber who comes to shave him, if he be not English, has, at least, this recommendation—he has, in his time, lived five years in Saint-Mary-Axe, and is *almost* English. More! when the Cockney—his heart set upon a little smuggling—buys a splendid French tea-pot, with a picture on each side of it; the very tea-pot which, from the moment that the Custom House officer comes abroad, puts our hero, who has the utensil in his hat, in the coldest sweat—that tea-pot, purchased as a “*souvenir*” for Mary Anne, though the innocent Cockney suspect it not, is, ten times out of twenty, English too.

Although he is in France, the Cockney is at a loss to conceive why there should be French manners—French feelings—French prejudices. We once witnessed a droll illustration of this astonishment. A real Cockney having stalked up and down the room of an hotel, where were hung several prints—the subjects, Napoleon’s victories; and having stared, somewhat sulkily, at every picture, turned himself round, and, with a look of pitying wonder, exclaimed, “Well, I declare, upon my word, they seem to think a good deal of this Bonaparte here!”

Follow the Cockney to Paris. See! he is in the garden of the Tuileries! What can he be doing near the statue of Diana? Ha! the sentry calls to him, and the Cockney, with thunder in his brow, looks savagely at the foreigner. Our indignant countryman is, however, ordered away, and, swelling with national greatness, he moves on. What could he be doing at the statue? Let us see. Oh, here it is! The Cockney—poor fellow! it is an amiable weakness, he cannot help it—the Cockney has written in pencil his address in full on the right leg of Diana: here it is, “*John Wiggins, Muffin-maker, Wild Street, Drury Lane, was here on the 20th of July, 1839.*” A most important fact, thinks Cockney Wiggins, and one that ought to

be disseminated amongst the visitors of the gardens of the Tuileries.

We have seen how the Cockney blesses himself on his Sunday proprieties when at home: abroad, however, it is another matter. "When at Rome, you know," he observes wittily, "we must do as Rome does. Eh?" The Cockney disdains not to illustrate the proverb. It is the Sabbath-night: we are at the theatre, Porte St. Martin. Who is that gentleman and party in the front box? Can it be? Yes, it is no other than the Englishman who, at "The Adam and Eve," every summer Sunday, virtuously smokes his pipe, and, with a fine sense of self-respect, confines himself to eight glasses of brandy-and-water. There he is, happy as a duck in a shower, with his wife, his sons, and his daughters. Next day, near one of the Barriers, a horse is to be baited by dogs: there is also to be an interesting fight between an ass and a muzzled bear. There, at the show, is the Cockney; there he is: only, however, to express his vehement disgust at the brutality of the French. He returns to England; and having profanely enjoyed his Sundays abroad, thinks it his duty to sign every petition for the better observance of the Sabbath at home. John Bull is no hypocrite—not he!

The Cockney in his travels, like a mackerel in water, cannot turn without displaying a new beauty in a new light. He is not to be thoroughly known when rooted to London soil. See him bound for the Rhine. He is for the first day or two all anticipation of the coming glories of his voyage; yet, do not wonder if, from Coblenz to Mentz, he remained below, in the cabin, playing cribbage with a congenial fellow-tourist.

"And what place is that?" asked a Cockney who, coming upon deck, suddenly beheld the stupendous fortress of Ehrenbreitstein.

"That, sir, is supposed to be one of the largest fortresses in the world—Ehrenbreitstein."

"God bless me! very large indeed, very. Enormous! I——" and he turned his head to his friend, "I wonder how many beds could be made up there?"

The speculation revealed the calling of the travellers; they were Cockney innkeepers—"The Blue Lion" out upon a jaunt with "The Bag-o'-Nails."

Even on our English shores, the Cockney is an animal of interest. There is infinite fun and humour in him when, escaped from the counter, and carefully put up in a continental Strand-made *blouse*, he sauntereth dreamily along, picking up star-fish on Ramsgate sands; or takes his post on Margate pier, with—

prudent man !—a paper of shrimps under one arm, and in one hand, ready like Van Tromp, to “sweep the Channel,” the best of telescopes !

The Cockney is a good fellow at heart ; and would be a much better, certainly a much more agreeable animal, had he not the crotchet in his head, that he was not only the cleverest, the wittiest, but, at the same time, the most decent, and the most moral, of all earth's many-favoured children.

THE MONEY-LENDER.

"If, sir, you persist in your course—if you refuse me the mercy of even six days—"

"I do persist, and I do refuse ; and what then, sir ?"

"Then, sir, you will inevitably ruin me !"

"Sir," made answer Mr. Bite, fixing his raven eye on the agonised features of his suppliant, "sir, I ruin a man a week." And, in this instance—for we would do all justice to the Money-Lender—Mr. Bite uttered the stern, the simple truth.

"My good sir—"

"Well, come, you shall have the time," said Mr. Bite. And let the reader take this assurance ; we paint no shadow, but a real serf of Plutus, a veritable Bite, even as he lived. "You shall have the time, sir," and Bite's eyes sparkled, and he leered like an ogre on his prey. "We'll call the five hundred, six hundred and fifty, and—"

"What, sir !—a hundred and fifty for one week ?—you can't ask it !" exclaimed the victim, aghast.

"You want the accommodation, eh, sir ?" meekly inquired Bite.

"It is life or death to me."

"I know that," said the Money-Lender ; "and, in such cases, it is always my maxim to sell life as dearly as I can."

"But, Mr. Bite—"

Mr. Bite coughed, took out his watch, and said, "Past ten o'clock."

To give the true expression of Bite's character, we are fain to paint him in a family group : yes, to bring out all the peculiar attributes of his mind—and, we repeat, we deal not in fiction—it is necessary to place the Money-Lender in his old, familiar scenes. Enter then, Bite's clerk, the managing harpy of the firm, to take his daily lesson.

"If Mr. Firetop calls about his bill for two hundred—"

"Mr. Firetop's bill," answers the Money-Lender, "isn't worth a pipe-light : but, as he has some innocent, good men at the back of it, why, it may be done at ninety. Stop, you must put in six dozen of the very small claret at the usual figure."

"Then there's the widow Stokes, at the snuff-shop. That bill, for seventy."

"Let me see," says the benevolent Bite ; "as she is a lone, unprotected widow, why, we'll say five—yes, five per cent."

"Sir !"—and the clerk is all astonishment.

"But, as we've yet plenty of Quarto's bankrupt-stock in the store-room, the widow—it's for two months ?—ha, well, she must take ten pounds' worth of prayer-books."

"Then, sir, there's young Sparkish, about his pictures. Will you advance upon the Raphael and Titian ?"

"Humph ! the subjects are hardly proper for a respectable man ; they are a little profane : still, if he 'll throw in the Cuypp, that with the three cows—"

"Talking of the Cuypp, sir, Simpkins, the milkman, at Hoxton, sir, has at last consented to let you have his stock at your own price. And then, sir—"

"Who's that ?" cries Bite, listening to a voice in the passage.

"Mr. Charlesworth, sir, about the annuity."

"My chair !" exclaims the Money-Lender ; and the clerk wheels the chair forward, Mr. Bite, senior, being suddenly taken very ill. He sinks down, his hands drop, his legs are motionless ; and in his vulture face there is an expression of extremest languor. Can the good man be death-smitten ?

"Well, father," says Mr. Baptist Bite (who resembled his parent as one hempseed resembles another), ushering in an unsuspecting victim, "I have been effecting a little business in which you are concerned."

"I concerned !" cries the elder Bite, feebly, his eyes half closed and wandering ; "Ugh ! Concerned ! Well, what ?"

"Why, sir, a little transaction with this gentleman, Mr. Charlesworth. We are to receive from him, by way of annuity, for the thousand pounds, three hundred a-year during your honoured life."

"Life ! my life !" wails old Bite ; "Ho, ho ! Are you mad, Baptist ? *My* life ! I, who haven't a month ?"

"Oh, sir," answers the filial Baptist, "many, many years, I trust. I'm sure, sir, if I thought otherwise, I'd make no such bargain ; 'twould be presumptuous ; quite tempting Providence, sir !"

"It musn't be, it sha'n't be," cries old Bite ; it's giving a thousand pounds away ; it sha'n't be," exclaimed the Money-

Lender, with an energy that quite exhausted him ; for he sank back in the chair, and coughed alarmingly.

"I am very sorry, sir," said Baptist, "but my word is passed. Mr. Toady has been two days at work on the deed ; and really, my dear father, as men of honour—"

"Well, well," answers Bite the elder, "if it's gone so far ; but you'll ruin yourself, Baptist. You are too rash for a man of business. In a month, the gentleman—Ha ! sir ; you have got a pretty bargain out of my foolish son—in a month you may ring the money upon my tombstone !"

(And certain we are, if aught could raise the dead, such ringing would make Mr. Money-Lender burst his cere-clothes.)

"Don't talk in that way, father," said Baptist, his eyes moistening ; "don't go on in that fashion.—In this room, sir, if you please," and Baptist showed the fortunate gentleman into an adjoining apartment.

Mr. Bite rose from his chair, took two or three strides, and, with a look of vivacity, observed to his clerk, "Jones, I shall not come to town to-morrow ; for I meet the hounds at Box-hill ;" Mr. Bite adding to his many social accomplishments that of fox-hunting.

Mr. Bite was a man of the strictest conventional morals. His orthodoxy was, in his own opinion, first-rate. This happy truth he never failed to illustrate, at once to his own glorification and the confusion of the heretic. "Well, sir—ha !—I don't know what to say about these books, sir ;" and Mr. Bite, with his hands in his pockets, doubtfully surveyed the library shelves of a hapless scholar, fallen into the Money-Lender's web. "Books, sir"—and he seemed to sneer at the gilt russias and morocco bindings—"are no security at all ; quite a drug. Indeed, people have no business with any book but one ; I never read any but one—there is only one."

"You perceive, Mr. Bite," observed the victim, "that they are the very best editions, and in the most costly bindings."

"I had much rather have any other security, sir. I don't see what I can do with books."

"At all events," replied the scholar, "they will more than treble the amount of your claim upon me ; and, in a word—"

"You've no pictures—no family plate—no jewels !" asked the Money-Lender.

"Nothing, but my old friends there," answered the man of letters ; his very heart-strings quivering at the anticipated separation.

"I'm sure I don't know what to do !" cried Bite, helplessly ;

"books are of no use to me ; for, as I have said, there is only one book—"

"And that book," said the student, "I presume is the—"

"Of course, sir ; what other book could it be ? The Bible, sir : no other. God help us !—no other."

"Well, Mr. Bite, you knew my resources : came, I thought, prepared to conclude the business."

"I suppose I must," answered Bite ; "and yet it's a terrible risk for money. Let me see ; coin is very scarce : it must be at ninety-five, with these things as further security."

"Ninety-five ! Ninety-five per cent ! Why, you said—"

"I don't precisely recollect what I said ; but, as a Christian, I know it is impossible for me to oblige you on any lower terms. And do, sir, understand me, it is all to serve you. I don't like such security : in fact, I had much rather—" and here Mr. Bite quickly took his hat, and made towards the door.

"Mr. Bite," exclaimed his creditor, entreatingly, "I have depended upon you, sir."

"Well, my word's my religion ;" and Bite, relenting, approached the book-shelves. "What's here ?" and he took from the shelf a superb copy of Gibbon. "Pah ! an infidel, sir ; an atheist, sir, this Gibbon. I don't wonder, sir, that you want money, if you pass your time with such people ; I'd have every book burnt but one ; and this book should be flung in the hottest—eh ! what's here ? Hume ! Another infidel, another atheist ! God help you, I don't wonder that you're a beggar."

"Sir !" exclaimed the student, and his face was crimsoned with indignation.

"Don't wonder at all at it," repeated Mr. Bite, assuming a higher tone ; whilst the companion of infidels, conscious that he was in the fangs of the orthodox Money-Lender, bit his lips, and struggled to keep down his passion, — his contempt. "Providence," continued Mr. Bite, "can hardly bless people who lose their precious hours in—in—eh ? humph !" And the Money-Lender, with sundry ejaculations, and many mumblings, continued to take volume by volume from the shelves, now returning them to their places, with a "Pish ! pah ! God help me ! Of course, a beggar ;" and now, smiling, and eyeing with great complacency the beautiful bindings. Whilst the Money-Lender was thus engaged, certain emotions, by no means favourable to the safety of Mr. Bite, visited the owner of the volumes. His heart fairly leapt, as old Bite would irreverently close some long-loved book ; and with a "Pah ! pish !" shove it between others. The student felt almost as a living father feels when he sees his child smitten by a ruffian blow : all his blood

rushed to his heart, and his fingers worked and itched to hook themselves in the profane Money-Lender's collar, and twirl him into the street. The contemptuous expressions of Bite appeared almost a personal affront toward the much-loved companions of many noblest hours; hours made sacred by immortal visitings—set apart from wayfaring life; and giving wisdom, strength, and meekness in their golden fruits.

"Spenser!" exclaimed Bite, laying his profane hand on a magnificent "Faery Queen;" "Spenser! who ever heard of him? Poetry, it seems. Ha! humph! Sad stuff—wretched nonsense! No wonder that you're a—God help you! As I say, there is but one book;" and with this, the "Faery Queen," not being the coin of the realm, slipped from between the fingers of the Money-Lender, and fell bruised at his feet. The student leapt forward, took up the book, and—Bite's better genius, Plutus, assuredly at that moment protected him, or he had fallen to the floor, levelled by the unknown "Faery Queen." Eyeing him with little less disgust than the student would have looked upon a cannibal, taken with his mouth full of a shipwrecked purser, the worshipper of Spenser carefully wiped the dust away, and returned the golden volume to its place. Mr. Bite continued his inspection—continued his criticisms. No reviewer ever passed judgment more briefly, or with more authority; even though, like Mr. Bite, he saw little of the books beyond their covers.

"Oh! ah! come," and Mr. Bite, had evidently fallen upon an author dear to his heart; "Robertson! that's good; a churchman—a worthy man; heard a good deal of him—of the established church, I believe; deserves, I think, considering how you have used the atheists and infidels, deserves a little better binding." And Bite, in his lively interest for the established church, looked reproachfully at the man of letters.

"Swift! ha! another churchman. Great man, I've heard: he might, too, have been more handsomely treated, considering. What's that?"—and Mr. Bite pointed to a row of books, some seventy tomes, rich and glittering in green morocco and gold—"What's that? By the bindings, a churchman, I sincerely hope."

"That is, sir,"—the student felt literally humiliated as he paused before orthodoxy at ninety-five per cent—"that is, sir, the best edition of Voltaire."

"What!" cried Mr. Bite, retreating a step or two, "the—the French Voltaire?"

"I have never heard of any other," answered the man of letters.

"God help us!" exclaimed the Money-Lender, seizing his hat and stick.

"You're not going, Mr. Bite?"

"I don't know, sir," answered Bite; at the same time laying down his hat and cane, "that I ought to stay a moment here; I am not certain that I am safe that the roof mayn't fall in, with such awful atheists about me. Read Voltaire!"

"Did you ever read him?" asked the student maliciously.

"Do you think, sir, that Providence would have blessed me as it has, if I had? Thank God, sir! I couldn't read a word of him. And sir, I repeat, I never read but one book; no man ought to read but one book; and that book is—What! twelve o'clock!" cried Bite, as he heard the chimes of a neighbouring church. "I can't stay another minute; I have a pressing engagement, that—*young man*," and Bite cast his eye towards the row of green and gold, "I don't wonder that you're a beggar."

"But, Mr. Bite," said the student, following the Money-Lender from the room, "I may consider the business concluded? You make the advance, taking the library as security for—"

"As for security, *young man*, the security is much less with such atheists; however, I—yes, you may send the books;" and Mr. Bite departed. Three days elapse, and our student stands at the hearthstone of the Money-Lender.

"Have you counted the books?" asked Bite of Jones, the clerk.

"Yes, sir; and here's the list, sir," answers Jones, giving a paper.

"Why, sir," and Bite looks sharply at the borrower, "what do you mean, by this? you know, I suppose, the engagement? I am to renew your bill, and advance you one hundred pounds, on a bill for a hundred and ninety-seven—"

"Ninety-five," observed the student.

"Ninety-seven, sir; money's money now; it couldn't be at less interest. Ninety-seven; I holding your library as further security."

"Well, sir?" says the student.

"Well, sir? the books were counted, as I understood; but here you bring me a list of seventy short," says Bite.

"I can easily explain that. Of course, I did not send the Voltaire."

"And why not, sir?" asks the orthodox muckthrift."

"I understood you to say, that you didn't think yourself safe under the same roof with it."

"And so I did, sir; and what of that? Do you think *I've never an out-house?*"

Voltaire, in his green and gold, was added to Robertson, Swift, and his thousand former companions. Bite, though detesting the principles of the "French Voltaire," had, nevertheless, with Doctor Dibdin, a soul for "the superb tooling of Lewis."

"I've no objection to the bill, sir; none at all," said Bite, in one of his best humours, to Mr. Canaan, a rigid methodist and general dealer. "It's for fifty, I see;—yes, the usual consideration, and you can have the cash."

Mr. Canaan bowed benignly to the Money-Lender.

"Money, however, is very scarce; very scarce," said Bite.

Mr. Canaan raised his eyebrows, drew down the corners of his mouth, and looked pensive.

"Still, sir, as I said, you shall have the money. Pray, sir, what do you think of the English Drama?"

Mr. Canaan was not perfectly assured of Bite's meaning.—
"Drama, sir?"

"The theatres,—the playhouses?" said Bite.

"I trust, sir, that, as a Christian, I have them in proper detestation."

"You never read play-books, then?" Mr. Canaan cast a look of horror all round the room. "Very right," said the cur of Plutus, "very right. There is only one book that a man should read, and that book is—however, to return to business. I am sorry that your religious scruples—for my own part, I honour everybody's conscience—stand in the way of the present bargain."

"I trust not, sir," said Canaan; "how, sir?"

"You must perceive, sir, that my business is very extensive and very various; that my money, the little I have, is locked up in many strange places. Now, it so happens, that it will be impossible for me, Mr. Canaan, to melt this little piece of paper for you, unless you take fifteen pounds' worth of playhouse tickets. You perceive I am, unfortunately, the proprietor of two or three private boxes—to be sure, they enable me to gratify my friends—and the tickets, the admissions to these boxes, I am, at times, compelled to put off in little transactions like the present."

"Tickets, Mr. Bite—tickets, to take me to a playhouse!" said Canaan.

"You are not compelled to go yourself: you know, you can sell them again—"

"I would sooner burn them," cried Canaan.

"As I said, I honour everybody's conscience," repeated Bite; "sell them, or burn them. By selling them, you would, no

doubt, realise a profit; for, just now, the theatre is very much sought after, isn't it, Mr. Jones?"

"Very much," answered the faithful clerk.

"I thought so. By the by, what are they doing, Jones?"

"'The Blood-stained Boot-Jack,' sir; 'or the Cruel Cobbler.' Beautiful thing, sir," cried the waggish Jones; "got up, sir, under the superintendence of the man himself, sir, that did the murder."

"Impossible!" cried Canaan.

"Quite true," said Jones; "moreover, there is a letter in the play-bills, from the murderer to the manager, telling the public that the play is quite as real as the murder itself. Beautiful thing, sir: and so moral."

Mr. Canaan was a stiff-necked man, and would not take tickets. Happy, however, are we to state that he did not depart with his bill uncashed. The father of Mr. Bite had, in his maturity, written a book in contempt of riches, entitled "Dust in the Balance." In the vanity of his heart, he had caused some ten thousand impressions to be struck off; but, so perverse, so incorrigible is the world, not ten copies were ever fairly circulated. The stock was inherited by Bite, our hero; and in his hands, it is our belief, did a world of good; for it had been for years his custom to discount certain bills at a hundred per cent., including at least fifty, in fine hot-pressed copies of "Dust in the Balance." (And this is a truth.) It is our hope that Mr. Canaan, eschewing "The Blood-stained Boot-jack," was greatly edified by "Dust in the Balance!"

We have painted one Money-Lender—not the mere sordid muckworm of a century ago, but the man-eater of the present day. There are, however, many varieties. There is the fashionable Money-Lender, who wriggles himself into parties; calls a broken lord or two his friend; gets himself enrolled at a small club, and dubs himself a gentleman. He has a great taste for the fine arts, visits the opera, and thinks Bellini a most magnificent fellow. Two or three popular authors are, if you will believe him, his most intimate acquaintances; and the leading actor, whoever he may be, dines with him once a week. He is, moreover, a liberal in his opinions: at least, he was, until Reform became vulgar, and a mild Whiggism was voted the genteel thing. He is a man, on his own word, of the very best society; for he is, every season, one of the seven hundred who feed at the Honourable Mrs. Rougepot's, the oriental dowager's. It is at his club, and at such parties, that he makes friends, and enlarges his connections; it is there that he spins his web, and catches the "gilded flies" of fortune.

The legal Money-Lender is a harpy of the longest claws : he has no more heart than a drum ; no more blood than a cricket. He is, notwithstanding, a most respectable solicitor ; as chary of his reputation as a housewife of a favourite piece of cracked china ; and resents the slightest insinuation of his infamy with even alarming vigour. Now and then he is, poor man, grossly libelled by the press ; whereupon, he becomes one of a society for the better protection of morals. Though steeped from head to sole in rascality—though a moral Ethiop, under the benign protection of the law of libel, he is the purest of the pure ; yea one of the fairest of the sons of men. It is ten to one that he has married prosperously—has caught a rich and inexperienced client—perhaps one of three orphan sisters ; and is, thereby, the friend and legal adviser of the unprotected. As such, he absorbs the whole of their substance, enmeshes them in the nets of his craft, and—the process is rapid—they are beggars. That the children of affluence should have nothing to remind them of their past condition—that nothing tangible should remain to them to awaken recollections of happier days, the money-lending lawyer has been known to remove from them every painful memento, even though it were a harp or a piano. He is, nevertheless, a most respectable man ; has very handsome chambers, keeps a score of clerks, and lends money from eighty to cent. per cent. His face—we draw from the life—would be inexpressive as a stale muffin, were it not for the two cat-like eyes, and thin, cruel, lips, that redeem it from utter blankness. He moves stealthily as an ogre : as though haunted by the memory of a thousand acts that have written him down in the private memoranda of Lucifer. He, the Attorney Money-Lender, is admirably fitted to display the wisdom and philanthropy of the English laws. Had he lived in Spain, he would have made an excelling familiar of the Inquisition ; would, with demoniacal complacency, have applied the thumbscrew, the burning pincers, and the molten lead. Born in England, bred an attorney, and adding to his professional cares the anxieties of Money-Lender, he is yet enabled to satisfy his natural and acquired lust of evil, and he therefore *gets up costs*. He has never stood at the bar of a police-office, and yet his hands are dyed with the blood of broken hearts. Under cover of the law, armed with its curious weapons, he lives a life of rapine, hoards wealth, passes for a most respectable man—for he never had a bill protested, and owes no man a shilling—and, when he dies, a tombstone will record his apocryphal virtues for the example of a future generation. Yet is not the wretched Money-Lender all to blame ; his iniquity, base as it is, is assisted by bad laws. The wisdom of

the legislature has made poverty punishable ; and, putting the scourge, iniquitous costs, into the hands of the attorney, he wields the knout for his own especial benefit, to the torture, and sometimes death of the suffering. "Death !" exclaims the reader ; "what exaggeration ! Is it possible that so respectable a man as—" Quite possible : worse, quite true. Our hero, soft-spoken as a maid, and sleek-looking as a beaver, has dabbled in blood, but only in the way of the law. The bow-string is unknown in free and happy England ; but, be sure of it, innocent reader, *red tape* has its daily victims.

Then, there is the benevolent Money-Lender. The animal that, whilst he devours his man, drops crocodile tears ; and, in the act to pounce upon his victim—to feed at his very throat—looks blandly in his face and cries, "What can I do ?"

There is the humorous Money-Lender. The frank, jovial, companionable, fellow, who asks sixty—seventy—a hundred per cent. with a horse-laugh, and thinks the hardest usury the finest joke.

The bacchanal Money-Lender is a common animal. He lends half in gold, and half in poison : so many pounds sterling, and so much bad vinegar, that, having been kept near port, must, as he conceives, have a vinous flavour.

There is the military Money-Lender. He is a captain, whose name and rank have never appeared in "The Army List." Nevertheless, he is a man of most refined honour, and robs with the highest sense of a gentleman. He has a country-house somewhere ; but generally has his letters directed to a tavern, where it will sometimes unfortunately happen he has either just been, or just coming, or where he will not return for many days, as circumstances may direct. He is very often the jackal, the mere hunter, for the greater *carnivora* ; and, as an "agent" is not called upon to blush for another party, he will look in your face, and ask your permission to eat you with eye unblenched, and cheek untinted. He has great connexions ; and it is, therefore, a condescension in him to pillage what he denominates a common person ; he has, however, if strongly pressed, no invincible repugnance to make a meal of a tradesman, though his fare, when he can choose it, is generally noblemen in their minority. Nothing so succulent as a peer under age, to be eaten in due time with *post obit* sauce.

Jew Money-Lenders are numerous as the hairs in Aaron's beard : and, for the most part, all alike. They have no variety of character, and have lost the picturesque villany of former centuries. We could feel a degree of sympathy for the outraged Hebrew—the branded, despised, insulted wretch—taking his

slow and sure revenge of the oppressors. We could follow him with interest to his coffers, where the despised vagabond, day by day, hoarded power and strength ; where he amassed the means of authority ; where he built an altar at which even the rigid Christian should be made to bow down and worship. Persecution has ceased, and the Jew Money-Lender is merely a vulgar, ravenous, sordid thing—a horse-leech among leeches.

The Money-Lender and his victims!—If the reader would behold their types, let him wend to the Zoological Gardens, and contemplate the remarkably fine boa-constrictor at present enriching the collection of *reptilia*. Shut up in the box with the boa, the reader will perceive some half-dozen pigeons. Innocent, guileless things ! They perch on the scaly folds of the monster ; they pick up peas near his horrible jaws ; and so, dreaming not of the coming day, they live for weeks and weeks. For all this, they are only there to be swallowed. The boa is motionless as a coil of cable ; but once in, say, three months, he stirs himself, and, sure as sheriff's officer, gorges his unsuspecting prey—feathers, bones, and all.

Reader ! starve, beg, or—no, we must not say, rob—but, whatever you do, eschew the Money-Lender. He who is bound in his bills, though he may think himself a man, is, indeed, only a pigeon, a guinea-pig, a rabbit—with a torpid boa.

THE DINER-OUT.

THE DINER-OUT—we mean the knife-and-fork professor with a good and wide connexion—is a man without a care. If he be not, then are the sources of human anxiety too many and too mysterious for us to fathom. But it is impossible that the Diner-Out can feel one touch of mortal misery: steeped in the gravies of his neighbour—fortified with the venison of his hundred friends—ennobled, yea, sublimated above the petty accidents of this dim spot “which men call earth,” by the port, champagne, and burgundy of his best and dearest acquaintance—the meaner ills of this life fall upon him, hurtless as hail upon an elephant. He passes on, made invulnerable to calamity by the contributed benevolence of those—the best and brightest of the world—who “give dinners.” He is at once the child and glory of hospitality; the representative and embodiment of every table-cloth virtue. He is a living and increased evidence of the goodness of our common nature; a prize biped, fed upon the oil and honey-cakes of his liberal fellow-men.

But, it may be objected by some mean-souled wretch, content to feed on figs, penny-rolls, and spring-water—for we have heard of such monsters—that the Diner-Out has no household gods! Ha! ha! has he not? “Better,” says the canting fellow, with a starved look of would-be-independence, “better to eat an onion at our own hearth, than ortolans at the board of the rich.” Hungry reader! give no ear to such hypocrisy—trust not thin-chapped temperance; but glance at the rosy, shining face—survey the abominous dignity of our hero, and believe in the Diner-Out!

“The Diner-Out has no household gods.” All the better for him: he is not called upon to sweat and labour for daily offerings of meat and drink—the said household gods being most clamorous, most constant, in their calls, on butcher, baker, and brewer; but, turning from his own unconsecrated hearth, quitting his cold, unguarded fireside, the Diner-Out spreads me his cloth in the midst of a hundred worshippers, having the choice of a hundred

temples, wherein he may perform with fullest ceremony his social devotions. "Away with the bigotry of knife-and-fork," cries our Diner-Out; and as that wise philosopher, Sir Thomas Browne, made it his boast, that he could say his prayers with either Turk or Levite, so would our real Diner-Out manifest the greatness of his heart, and the magnanimity of his digestion, by partaking of pilau with Mahomet, or roast kid and pistachio-nuts with Rothschild. Nay, were it possible that the Wandering Jew could put up for a day at either the Clarendon or the Crown-and-Anchor, our Diner-Out would exhibit his triumph over vulgar prejudices, by "cutting the stranger's mutton!"

"The Diner-Out has no household gods!" We return to this scurvy charge, that we may show the felicity of the Diner-Out to consist in what is foolishly considered his desolate condition. Household gods are divinities of a most tyrannical character: Mumbo Jumbo and the Blue Monkey are not half so ravenous, require not sacrifices of so terrible a kind, as at times do these said household gods—these domestic prettinesses—wreathed, in the pages of poets and novelists, with immortal roses, and having aspects innocent and beautiful as the faces of cherubim. Such, however, are their holiday decorations—their feast-day looks—when the steam of the kitchen rises around them, and hangs like beads of honey-dew upon their temples. These are the household gods of the rich—these are the divinities who never spoil their plump, ripe apple cheeks, by drawing long faces at an empty grate; who never blow their blue nails in pitiless January, and sometimes trench upon good manners, by muttering an oath at the unaccommodating coal-merchant. Cheap is the furniture of the Diner-Out, moderate his rent; and if few his sympathies, few his wants. Our Diner-Out—he is ninety-nine times in the hundred a bachelor, either on a broken income, or on a property from the first but small—having no spouse, no children—must pay somewhat for outdoor luxuries. Unblest with the soft endearing voice of wife at home, he is compelled to throw himself upon the opera; having no children to feed, clothe, and send to school, he may be lavish in his love of white kid. He gets a dignity out of his bachelorship; and wanting the sweet religion of fire-side divinities, wears many coats in Regent Street. "Household gods!" said Jack Smellfeast, the other day—Smellfeast, be it known, is a Diner-Out of some distinction—"Household gods! Pooh!—I keep a horse."

The Diner-Out is, certainly, the professor of what may be considered one of the most difficult arts of life. This fact is proved by the hundreds who, in this glorious London, flourish

but for a season or two, and then, like swallows, go no man knows whither.

Dining out being, in these days, one of the most profitable of the arts and sciences, we shall consider ourselves in the gratifying light of public benefactors, if, from the practice of a Diner-Out, distinguished in the art for many years, we give a few hints to those of our fellow-men, who, like ourselves, look upon dinner to be the most important incident in the whole mortal four-and-twenty hours ; its value and beauty still increasing with the smallness of its cost to the diner. We entreat our readers to pause and contemplate the subject with a seriousness and attention of a more solemn and more intent description than any they may devote to the minor morals : people, of really very respectable substance and standing, doing excellently well without morals ; whilst there is much ignominy in the squalid fact of doing without a dinner. To dine well is, in the very largest acceptation of the phrase, to live well.

The Diner-Out must be a man of very moderate humour—of the most temperate and considerate wit. It must be his first study to obtain and keep the character of a good-natured fellow, a most agreeable companion, at the same time rendering it impossible for those who praise him to tell the why or the wherefore. We know that certain wags have blazed and coruscated for a season or two at a few tables where are to be found the first delicacies of the season, whether of bird or beast, vegetable or man ; the first pine-apple or the last author ; but these wits are but for a few invitations ; the regular professional Diner-Out, and it is of him we speak, is for all cloths. It must therefore be his study to display a certain good-natured dullness, an amiability that shall make him repress the brightest jest that ever fell from human lips, if by any possibility the unuttered joke could be thought to tell against one of the party ; that one, it may be, happening to possess the noblest kitchen—the most glorious cellar ; and therefore to be conciliated by a meek politeness, an attentive urbanity, that shall insure the Diner-Out a future summons to his table : for it must be remembered that the Diner-Out, whilst apparently enjoying the delights of the repast, and its after ease and hilarity, is, indeed, labouring to extend his connexion. He is not asked to grace a board on the strength of a new picture—a wonderful poem—a galvanic, man-eating, man-slaying novel, or the discovery of new self-supplying sugar-tongs, or for the great merit of having lived with the Esquimaux on walrus-flesh and train-oil : our Diner-Out feasts not upon any such adventitious, any such accidental, principle, but upon higher deserts ; yea, he obtains his turtle and burgundy

from worthier, from more lasting causes ; for in a very flutter of "delight," he helps any and every lady and gentleman to the wing of a chicken, and with a stereotype smile upon his face, is at a moment's notice prepared to be "but too happy" to "take wine" with all the world.

The Diner-Out must never be known to utter a brilliant witticism at the cost of any dinner-giver. The people will laugh heartily at the time ; but they will all remember that the Diner-Out wears a dangerous weapon ; and wits, like drunken men with swords, are apt to draw their steel upon their best acquaintance. He may, at certain pauses, venture a conundrum, or relate the last Yankee exaggeration from the papers ; or if he have genius sufficient, he may himself make two or three, swearing by the way that he has read them "in some obscure print : " these matters, wanting the edge of personality, cast around the Diner-Out a halo of cheap humour, and go to the sum of his character as a good-natured and agreeable fellow. He must shun scandal as it were garlic. If any of the party indulge in picking holes in the good names of their friends and acquaintance—a most common and most social pastime—the Diner-Out must keep a curb upon his tongue ; and, if possible, to divide off into conversation with his neighbour, must throw himself upon the olives, thereby indicating his want of interest in the immediate subject, and his peace with all the world. Let scandal take the highest pitch, let bright and burning jests abound, the Diner-Out must never seem to enjoy the fun : as though he listened to the drolleries of Malays or Japanese, he may survey the speakers with a mild benignity of look ; but for their words, for the edifying matter of their speech, that must be to him as an unknown tongue. At such times, an innocent suckling, smiling at the convolutions and the colours of a nest of snakes, must be our Diner-Out. He may crack nuts, whilst dinner-givers and common men crack reputation. Nor let the young Diner-Out believe for a moment that such moderation will be lost upon the influential persons of the party ; if not at the time, they are certain next day to remember the good-nature of "that agreeable fellow, Smellfeast ; " or, if his worthy qualities be quoted by another, they will, from the recollection of his meekness, promptly and fervently corroborate the good report of his knife-and-fork virtues. The wisdom of silence, and a good digestion, are among the brightest qualifications of a regular Diner-Out.

The Diner-Out may sing : that is, if he sing not too well, to give offence to dinner-givers who sing extremely well themselves, and thus, by an injudicious display of his talent, injure his

connection. Hence, he may sing, provided he sing small. He may also imitate London actors, crow like a cock, pipe like a bullfinch, or bray like an ass, as occasion may serve, and as he may be solicited to air his merits. He must, however, by all his hopes of his neighbour's knives and forks, take especial care that he never attempt to force a hearing. If conversation take a political turn, he must be dumb as an oyster—the reason is obvious: the Ultra-Whig on his right has a name for champagne; whilst the old Tory opposite is glorified by his burgundy.

The Diner-Out must make himself an especial favourite with the lady of the house; to her he must appear a pattern man—an excellent person—a virtuous eleven o'clock individual, with the profoundest admiration of that most ennobling, most excellent, and most intellectual of all human institutions, the institution of marriage; failing not to make it understood, that blighted hopes, in the morning of his life, have for ever doomed him to the withering state of celibacy.

The Diner-Out must have a most passionate love for children. He must so comport himself that, when his name shall be announced, every child in the mansion shall set up a yell—a scream of rapture—shall rush to him—pull his coat tails—climb on his back—twist their fingers in his hair—snatch his watch from his pocket; and, whilst they rend his super-Saxony—load his shoulders—uncurl his wig—and threaten instant destruction to the repeater, the Diner-Out must stifle the agony at his heart and his pocket, and to the feebly-expressed fears of the mamma, that the “children are troublesome,” the Diner-Out must call into every corner of his face a look of the most seraphic delight, and with a very chuckle, assure the anxious parent that “the little rogues are charming!”

There are, however, houses—places of desolation!—in which there are no children. In this case the Diner-Out must love the dog. When we say love the dog, we do not mean that he must simply express a liking for dogs in general; but that he must, in the most unequivocal, in the liveliest manner, display an affection—a passion—for the dog of the house: be it

“Mastiff, greyhound, mongrel grim,
Hound or spaniel, lurch or lym,
Or bobtail tike, or trundle-tail,”

the Diner-Out must take the creature to his heart, and love it a little less—and only a little—than its mistress and its master. If there be no dog, the Diner-Out must love the cat, perhaps of the Angola or the Persian kind, and a favourite with the family; (if, indeed, simple man and wife are to be dignified with that

most delicious of English collectives). Should there be no cat—for we like, in this our manual, to provide for even extreme cases—the Diner-Out must find a resource in the parrot; if no parrot, in the canary; if no canary in the goldfinch or linnet: if, however, there be neither beast nor bird to engage his affections, the Diner-Out must fall in love with the china, or any moveable to which, as he may speedily learn by his sagacity, the lady of the house shall — after, of course, her husband — be most attached. We once knew an illustrious Diner-Out—to be sure he *was* a genius!—who took fifty dinners a-year from one family: and why? He had contrived to become desperately enamoured with the drawing-room fire-irons; by some adroit means, if a stranger were present, always led the conversation to them, and thus elicited, from one of the household, a legend of the family, in which the courage of the mother—at the time a delicate and lovely creature of little more than nineteen—was most extraordinarily displayed; the virgin defending herself with only a poker from the advances of a strange unarmed man, generally believed to be a burglar, but by the lady herself suspected to be something considerably worse. We are convinced that we do not err, and we state the fact for the advantage and instruction of all Diners-Out, when we assure the reader that the sagacious Marrowmouth dined off that drawing-room poker fifty times per annum. Yes, fifty times. Now he, indeed, must be unworthy of the trade of dining out, who cannot find something like a poker in every homestead.

The Diner-Out must take every opportunity of insinuating a knowledge of his high connexions. If he really and truly know no Dukes, he must manage to make a few for his special acquaintance. The intimacy—though it only amounts to that of touching hats—will give a certain glory to the Diner-Out; the lower he condescends to feed, the greater the lustre he brings with him. There was Silverprongs — only second to Marrowmouth — who always came into plebeian dinner-parties quite warm from the shake of hand of a Marquis. He, of course, brought with him something of the latent heat of aristocracy, something that made the visiting commoners—we mean the merely respectable people—very often take wine with Silverprongs, and on retiring to the drawing-room, smilingly hope for the cultivation of his acquaintance. There is another point to be impressed upon the attention of the pupil Diner-Out. If he visit families who have a great veneration for the literary character—we have already said that we like to provide for extreme cases—he must be hand-in-glove with every illustrious son of pen-and-ink with which these porcupine times abound. If, on the other side, any part of his connexion

lies among serious families—we have heard of such who, when they condescend to dine, make dinner a most devout piece of business—our Diner-Out must speak of proof impressions of portraits from the “*Evangelical Magazine*,” sent to him with the autograph compliments of the originals.

The Diner-Out must pay particular attention to that portion of his wardrobe which may be said to belong to his profession—his dinner suit must be faultless: he must have the last fold—the last wrinkle—the earliest intelligence of enlarged cuffs—of coat-tails narrowed or widened—of trowsers gathered in or rendered more expansive; and in these days, he must not fail to let his “*wit*,” like *Laverdiné’s*, in Beaumont and Fletcher’s old play,—

“Lie in a ten pound waistcoat.”

A few fathoms of gold-chain, with diamonds (if to be had) for shirt-buttons, and as many rings on his fingers as a rattle-snake has in its tail, are to the Diner-Out, almost indispensable. He is scarcely fit for decent company, if he do not appear as though he had come from a sitting for the sweetmeat portrait of a gentleman to the “*World of Fashion*.”

We have, we trust, registered the principal requisites for a professional Diner-Out; a character, as we humbly conceive, blessed beyond his fellow-men, inasmuch as he may be said to walk through life upon a dining-room carpet, seeing the best part of human nature—for surely man never so unreservedly displays “the silver lining” of his soul as at, and after dinner—and judging of the world in its happiest and most benevolent moments.

Dinner!—a word that to tens of thousands of men is associated with anxieties, and fears, and carking cares—a word, involving butchers’ bills, fishmongers’ bills, bills of bakers, bills of brewers, bills miscellaneous, not safely to be thought of at the time of shaving—all these hard and stern realities are to the Diner-Out nothing more than fictions; things that he has heard of, but never known. What is the butcher to the Diner-Out? No other than the executioner to the cook—the cut-throat to the kitchen. The fishmonger is a kind of benevolent Triton; a creature bringing the treasures of the deep to earth, for the capital gratification of our hero; he vends turbot, crimped skate, for the palate of our Diner-Out, who eats in happy ignorance of a future call. The wine-merchant is to him the genial and generous vassal of Bacchus—the cup-bearer deputed by the glorious god—calling men to drink and never bringing in the score. The gardener, who raises peas at only five guineas per quarter-peck, and flings

pineapples at the head of holly-crowned Christmas, what is he to the Diner-Out, but the servitor of plenty—of plenty in her most luscious and delightful aspect?

Is it possible, then, that the Diner-Out can be otherwise than a good-tempered creature? Can he have one spot in his heart touched with uncharitableness—with malice—with envy of dinner-giving man? Indigestion may come upon him; the gout may, sometimes, make him scream; but, when misanthropic, discontented, folks speak of the frailties of human nature, of the meanness and cruelty of this sometimes mean and cruel world, our Diner-Out will, with an ineffable look of charity, lay his hand upon his belly, and seriously avow his conviction that all men are the very best of people, and that the world itself is a world of milk and honey. He will avow, with almost a grateful tear standing in each eye, that he has lived and dined forty—fifty—sixty—years, and therefore “ought to know.”

And wherefore this charity?—wherefore this philanthropic softness? Why, to our Diner-Out, all men—at least, all his connexions, which, of course, contain all the world—are associated with something luscious and beautiful. Let the faces of his friends pass before his mental vision; they are not the faces of men—the visages of mere humanity; no! they are fantastically, yet withal delightfully, merged into the aspects of kitchen and cellar comforts. The Diner-Out conjures to his mental eye the countenance of his dear friend, Tissue the banker; is it the countenance of Tissue? No! but a *dindon aux truffes*, upon the banker's shoulders; Tissue having been for years immortalised for his turkeys with truffles. The thoughts of our Diner-Out wander to Ledgerly, the Indian merchant, when up starts Ledgerly, with a face distorted to something very like a haunch of venison. Again, our Diner-Out has grateful recollections of Moidore, the great bill-discounter: enter Moidore, with his square head shooting up into a bottle, whereon Châteaux Margaux is most legibly emblazoned. Thus, with our Diner-Out, his biped friends are but the types of better things. He knows the names of Tissue, of Ledgerly, and of Moidore; but they are endeared to him by their association with turkey, venison, and glorious wine.

Let him who has ten sons say, thrice a day, to each and all of them, “Boys, be Diners-Out!”

THE PAWNBROKER.

THERE would seem a kind of ignominy in the calling of a Pawnbroker. He is the rejected of all men. Albeit he may be a thriving tradesman, a man of scrupulous dealing, and high moral purpose, he nevertheless enjoys no part of that general respect, unaffectedly and freely avowed by the customer towards other upright dealers. There appears to be a tacit compact in society, to affect an ignorance of the very existence of a Pawnbroker. His merits are never canvassed — no man has, or ever had, a personal knowledge of him. The reader shall confess to the truth of this. Men are prone to vaunt the rectitude, the talents of their tradesmen. "*My* wine-merchant," "*My* boot-maker," even "*My* attorney;" but whoever yet startled the delicacy of a company, with "*My* Pawnbroker?" No; it is the fate of our subject to do what good he does unknown in gloomy precincts, and often with low, muttering voice, to eke out his benevolence to the whispering, trembling, broken-hearted, bronze-face, desperate suppliants, that, by turns, from the bolted privacy of his boxes—miserable pulpits, whence poverty and crime put up their prayers to Mammon — beg and demand the good man's courtesies. And save amongst the very poor — and of what worth are the praises of penury?—who trumpets forth the conscience, the fair-dealing of the Pawnbroker? "What a capital coat! Who's your tailor?" This is frequent admiration, — a common query. But who, missing the diamond from the finger of an acquaintance; who seeing not the yard of glittering gold chain in its wonted place; who, though at the time he may need the services of a conscientious money-dealer, — who thinks of venturing to the late possessor of the ring, "*who is your Pawnbroker?*"

The Pawnbroker of our day, vulgar and common-place as he is, has picturesque forefathers. The ancestry of Mammon is

"Mysteriously remote and high."

There were Pawnbrokers in Thebes—money-lenders, where now

the jackal prowls in Tadmor ; but they were the Pawnbrokers for the rich—not the bankers for the poor: they in their houses heaped

“ — pearls like pebble stones ;
Received them free, and sold them by the weight :
Bags of fiery opals, sapphires, amethysts,
Jacinths, hard topas, grass-green emeralds,
Beauteous rubies, sparkling diamonds,
And seld' seen costly stones.”

The ancient Pawnbroker was a human harpy, living on human bowels : modern legislation has pared his claws and cast about his calling the cloak of respectability. Indeed the money-lending family have suffered great mutations, now trafficking openly with princes, and now sneakingly, like spiders in dark corners, feeding on their victims. Who that sees the snug, self-complacent modern,—the Peter Jones Pawnbroker of Seven Dials,—thinks of his great commercial ancestors, the Lombard merchants ? More than five hundred years ago, they flourished in our city, and their name—musical as ringing gold—the synonym of wealth, still gilds a city quarter. They dispossessed the Jews—heretofore the only money-dealers—of their exclusive traffic, and, specially recommended by his Holiness Pope Boniface III. to Edward I. (see Rymer), became the princely Pawnbrokers to our English nobility and gentry ; for there was then no “public in general.” However, it is not our task to write a history of pledges ; and having, in justice to all present Pawnbrokers, briefly indicated the importance and grandeur of their origin, we shall dwell not on their changes in their descent, but endeavour to paint them as they are.

The Pawnbroker hath suffered from the civilisation of mankind. Some century or two ago, and there was, indeed, a mystery in his dealings ; now are they made open, exposed to the world by the world's lanterns—the two houses of Parliament. The time was, when at the mercy of the Levite, the poor man was eaten up at leisure ; his poverty made him an outlaw, a vagabond to be destroyed piecemeal by usury. Now he knows at least the extent of his sacrifice, the loss defined and made manifest by the statutes. There was a secrecy in the dealings of the by-gone money-lender ; the tribe dwelt in holes and corners, carrying on their “dreadful trade” in nooks and cellars. They wrote up no “Money Lent,” save what avarice had written in their faces ; they exposed no symbols or their calling, save their breathing carcasses. They sacrificed to Mammon as it were a forbidden shrine, and, amidst the world's distrust and bitterest contempt, filled their money-bags to bursting. Then the trade of the

Pawnbroker, albeit the name was not, was unrecognised by the law, and the rate of interest varied with the mercy of the lender, who may have securely levied fifty, seventy per cent., though every leaf of his ledger was (the pious custom of the day) emblazoned with a *Laus Deo* ! At length, the law stepped in ; and in process of days the Pawnbroker became what he now is, a respectable, though, as we have before hinted, an unacknowledged tradesman. He lives not in the allowance of the men who compose what they call decent society ; whilst the excellent people who wear diamonds, and dine off three courses, have never heard of the Pawnbrokers—save, indeed, in a novel or at a play-house. No, though he may render the dearest service at the dearest time : though he may be the sole surviving, the only friend in need,—none but the poor acknowledge the acquaintance of the Pawnbroker. Honest penury and careless vice feel no qualms, but give a “good den” to the tradesman ; but a respectable man was never yet discovered to have known him. Believe it, worldly respectability may, by accident, have had acquaintanceship with convicted felony ; nay, may blush not to own a past connection with some distinguished assassin, before the ferocity of the unfortunate man was found out : there is no peril to a man’s name in such personal knowledge ; on the contrary, it may for a time invest him with a very curious interest ; but to know a Pawnbroker is fatal ignominy indeed. On this fact all men are so strongly united, that, we repeat it, no prudent, respectable person can know a Pawnbroker ; for if he should confess to the knowledge, who, in the name of all the divinities respectable, who would continue to know him ?

The Pawnbroker being made a common-place by the law ; being divested of all his ancient, picturesque mysteriousness, and compelled by the unimaginative legislature, to carry on his calling in the eye of the world—we are rather to consider him rather as one of a number, than as the sole object of our attention. He is only to be viewed as affected by the variety of his customers, as a part and portion of their necessities.

To the Pawnbroker, the civility almost essential to the thrift of other tradesmen, is wholly superfluous. He places no quick-eyed shopman at the door, no tenacious solicitor of the lingering customer to enter and trade. Not he : he stands in his shop, the deputy of Mammon ; his customers are not to be wheedled, coaxed, grinned at, protested to ; he need not bow his back, or crush his face up into smiling wrinkles, at the hesitating purchaser. No ; his customers—the people who contribute to

him thirty per cent.—for the most part address him with a respectful meekness ; many with a shame-faced hesitation, as though they begged his aid, the free-offering of his money, — no pledge, no profitable hostage left. Other tradesmen make it part of their craft to presume the possession of wealth in their customers : to the Pawnbroker, they come—the best of them—for the time, branded with the mark of necessity. How different that face—there, that one in the third box from the door—how different that sweet meek countenance, from the face of five years since ! It is a lady, a young creature, with cankerous sorrow at her heart ; a fair thing, with that suffering, yet resigned look of grief, more profoundly touching than the wildest anguish. With the gentle, yet hesitating grace of the lady, and a faint smile at her lip, she presents a small trinket to the Pawnbroker : how different the money-lender's manner from the oppressive obsequiousness of the jeweller who, five years since, sold the locket to her ! The tradesman, with a cold eye, turns over the trinket ; whilst the woman — it is almost the last of her few ornaments, and there is poverty, and hungry babes at home — finds herself waiting, with stinted breath, the sentence of the Pawnbroker. At length he condescends to ask, "What do you want on this ?" and — God help her ! — her heart is eased at the condescension.

The Pawnbroker may, from the independence of his calling, by his exemption from the idle courtesies assiduously cultivated by other tradesmen, be as jocular as his native wit will allow him with many of his well-known customers. Again and again he may crack joke upon the coat withdrawn on the Saturday for the Sabbath wear, and duly returned to his safe guardianship on the Monday. Coats will wear out, the nap will lose its gloss, and the Pawnbroker will have his joke upon the frailty of broad-cloth, and, joking, offer less and less upon the fading raiment. As for the wife, who, for the twentieth time hath left the coat in pledge, she must good-humouredly fence with the wit of the Pawnbroker, who carries the pleasantry just as far as suits his humour, ending the parley with an emphatic avowal, not to lend a farthing more, gruffly bidding the woman "take the rag away." He knows she cannot take it away ; and, therefore, she resignedly receives both the impertinence of the shopkeeper and the money he vouchsafes her. Strange, that tradesmen should so differ in manners ! How very civil was Lubin Gosling, the tailor who made that coat !

The Pawnbroker is a sort of King Midas in a squalid neighbourhood ; he is a potentate sought by the poor, who bear with *his jests*, his insolence, his brutality : who, in tatters, bow down

to him ; and with want in all their limbs, with empty bellies and despairing hearts, make court to him, that he will be pleased to let them eat. What offerings are made to him ! How he is prayed, implored, to see some value in that which he inexorably deems worthless ; to coin, for a time, a shilling out of some miserable vestment,—its owner stands shivering in the box for the want of it ; — to advance sixpence on some household necessary. How can the Pawnbroker deal in the courtesies of trade ? His daily petitioner is want, with tiger appetite, reckless, abandoned, self-doomed vice, and moody despair. Life to him is so often “turned the seamy side without,” that he must needs be made callous by the hard nature of his calling. How is it possible to deal, to chaffer with hungry misery, beseeching for bread as though it were immortal manna, yet keep alive the natural sensibilities of the human heart ? How can we drive a bargain with despair, turning the penny with the complacency of a stockbroker ? How bate down wretchedness, how huckster with famine ?—yet this is the daily business of the Pawnbroker ! To him

“ The human heart is just one pound of flesh. ”

The shop is thronged : every box save one is full. What faces stare upon the man of money : how entreatingly the shopmen are besought,—yet how noiselessly do they perform their duties ! An hour may pass, and but a few low words spoken, with now and then the sound of money on the counter. Hush ! How quickly that bolt was shot ! The last box is filled. A lady has entered it ; and it is plain to be seen, that for the first time she is in the shop of a Pawnbroker. Poor thing ! Affluence rocked her cradle ; fortune, as she grew up, waited on her lightest wish ; the whole world was to her a fairy-ground. She never knew the touch of sorrow, and want was to her but a sound. She is now a wife ; and comes, for the first time, with a piece of plate, that—for there is death hovering about her hearth—she may pay doctors’ fees ! She feels, as she presents the plate to the shopman, like a thief. The man glances at her. “ Good God ! ” she thinks, “ can he suspect such a thing ? ” The Pawnbroker gives the sum required, and the lady, with scorching face, hurries from the shop. But, oh ! the feelings of shame and degradation that possessed her in those brief minutes ! Terrible things have been written on dungeon walls ; terrible, sickening evidences of human misery and human vice ; but if on the partitions of these boxes could be writ the emotions of those who have waited near them, the writing would be no less fearful than that traced in the Bastille,—graven in the Piombi.

If, however, poverty—hard-ground, squalid want—too often

make its offerings, put up its prayer at the shrine of the Pawnbroker, the spirit of independence may also exhibit its bluff face, utter its frank voice, from the boxes ! When friendship—worldly friendship, that like Briareus, with a hundred hands for a hundred new comers—pauses, and stammers at a loan, is there not the Pawnbroker with ready money ? There is Jack Pleasanton, one of the most agreeable of fellows ; when he meets you he will grasp your hand till your wrist cracks, but—he has so many engagements, being so delightful a creature, is so much sought after—he cannot spare time to walk or ride a mile to see you, though you are groaning at the gates of death. Excellent, light-hearted Jack ! he is every man's friend ; every man has a note of praise for him ; he is so vivacious, so liberal in his ideas—nay, so philanthropic in his opinions. You are convinced, for you have known him for these seven years, that, when he has no engagement, he would do anything to serve you. The frankness of his manner, the cordiality of his grasp, assures you that Jack has a heart of gold. You want ten pounds for as many days : how lucky ! for this way comes Jack ; he is never without money. The radiancy of his smile is the same ; the squeeze of his hand, if possible, more fervent than usual ; and, with not a moment's hesitation—for Jack is such a good fellow—you tell him of your passing necessity ; you ask him for the loan of ten pounds. A slight shudder passes over Jack's face, his mouth drops ; it is but for a moment, for again he smiles, again he seizes you by the hand, again expresses his willingness to do anything in the world for you ; “but—unfortunately—it—so—happens—that—he—never—was—so—short.” Syllabically doth he count forth his many deep regrets, and then smiling and squeezing as before, passes airily over it ; and, compared to Jack's smiling face, how beneficently looks even the most stony-featured Pawnbroker ; how cordial his voice to the hollow cheerfulness sounding in the throat of Jack ! Is it not far better to leave your watch with the man of the Lombardy Arms, than with the family of the Pleasantons ?

That the Pawnbroker should fail to take rank with other tradesmen employed by the nobility, gentry, and public in general, arises from the wholesome disgust implanted in us of a show of poverty. A man may more safely confess to any moral want, than a want of money. Therefore, the Pawnbroker, though so often a benefactor of his race, lives unthanked, unacknowledged, but happily for him, not unrewarded. Could the history of Pawning be faithfully written, and, after the fashion of the times, duly decked with portraits illustrative of the subject ; we doubt not that the world would stare at the likenesses. How

acquaintance might marvel at acquaintance ! and how folks—such respectable people, too—would stand convicted of the heinous crime of having sometimes wanted a guinea.

"I'll tell you what we'll do, love," said Mrs. Argent to her husband ; in the world's opinion they were folks of the very first respectability : they were accustomed to give such charming dinners, such pleasant tasteful suppers—"I'll tell you what we'll do, when you get this little lump of money." "What shall we do, my love ?" asked the quiet Mr. Argent. "Why, my dear," replied his politic wife, "it's sometime since we had anybody, and so I propose, directly you get this money, that we take the plate out of pawn, and give a party !" Could Harlequin, with a flourish of his wand, change the wooden partitions of the Pawnbroker's boxes into glass, how their tenants might stare at one another ! How the thief, but newly escaped with the stolen watch, might leer at the lady about to deposit her repeater,—how the fine gentleman start at the costermonger.

If the Pawnbroker would dignify his calling ; if he would give a triumphant proof of the utility of his services to the Christian world ; he has but to call up the shade of the great Isabella, who, when Columbus vainly begged to be permitted to find a new world for Spain, and, when wearied and repulsed, had turned his back upon the Court, nobly avowed her determination to pawn her jewels in the cause. "I undertake the enterprise for my own crown of Castile," said the queen, "and will pledge my jewels to raise the necessary funds." What lady after this, in a temporary dilemma, should hesitate to trust her diamonds with the Pawnbroker ? "The queen," says the historian, "despatched a messenger on horseback with all speed to call back Columbus. He was overtaken ten leagues from Granada, at the bridge of Pinos, a pass of the mountains, famous for bloody encounters between the Christians and Infidels during the Moorish wars. When the courier delivered his message, Columbus hesitated to subject himself again to the delays and equivocations of the court. When he was informed, however, of the ardour expressed by the queen, and the positive promise she had given, he returned immediately to Santa Fé, confiding in the noble probity of that princess." If the Americans had duly reflected on this incident, they certainly, with the stars and stripes, had quartered the three balls in their national flag.

The Queen of Navarre was another illustrious patroness of the Pawnbrokers in a glorious cause. She pawned her jewels for the Huguenots. "Two gentlemen," says the author of the "Life and Times of Sir Thomas Gresham," "agents of the Prince of Orange, came to this country to negotiate this business in London, and

confided it to the experienced hand of Sir Thomas Gresham. La Mothe writes, in the month of August, that while Queen Elizabeth was at Richmond, the Cardinal gave the Lord of the Council a grand entertainment at his house at Sheen; and, shortly after, carried the jewels to court, where they were shown to her majesty, who was curious to see them. The goldsmiths who were called in to value them, says La Mothe, considered them worth 60,000*l*. I am told that the queen declines advancing any money upon them, but the sum required will be sought among the merchants; and it seems that Sir Thomas Gresham, the greatest merchant in London, and, at the same time, queen's factor, has undertaken to raise 30,000*l*."

With these remarkable anecdotes of Pawnbroking, close we our essay.

THE PRINTER'S DEVIL.

THE PRINTER'S DEVIL! There is much romance in the name—nay much that takes us back to the stern realities of by-gone centuries; when ignorance, and its attendant ministers, craft and violence and cruelty, sat in the high places of the world, and the awakening intelligence of man was anathematised and scourged as the evil promptings of the fiend, and the day-spring of moral light was accounted as the “pale reflex” of the eternal fires. Hence, the printer became a wizard and a magician; hence, he had a familiar; hence—the Printer's Devil! In the day of darkness, in the hour of superstition, was our subject christened: it is now nearly four hundred years ago since he was baptised; and though his name was given him as a brand, great and mighty indeed were they who stood his sponsors. He had among them cardinals and mitred abbots; nobles and richest citizens. They took counsel together, and called the goodly creature—Devil. Hence he was to be seized, and bound, and burned to ashes; amidst the chaunting of priests, and the swinging of censers, and the aspersion of much holy water!

And is it possible—some reader may ask—that little Peter Trampington, Printer's Devil at the office of Willoughby and Co., at the full salary of five or six shillings per week—is it possible that Peter can have had an origin so wonderful, so perilous? Yes, believe it; the Printer's Devil, though now a household servant—though now he run like a Robin Goodfellow from office to author, and from author to office; though now he wait meekly for copy, or contentedly sleep away the time or composition, tarrying some three or four hours for the chapter or essay that is “just done”—even Peter, in the fifteenth century, might have had the singeing honours of an *auto da fé*; might have enjoyed a faggot from the same bundle as his master.

It is pleasant, passing pleasant, in these times, to look back upon the perils of the printer, seeing him as he now is, crowned with a thousand triumphs. We can, almost with complacency,

enjoy the predicament of John Faust, goldsmith of Mentz, offering in the pious city of Paris, his printed bibles at five and six hundred crowns a-piece; and then, suddenly abating his demand, tendering them at the remarkably low price of sixty. The scribes take the alarm. The devil must be bondman to the printer. The books are curiously scanned, and it is manifest as truth, the uniformity of the copies declares the workmanship, or at least the co-assistance of Beelzebub himself. (A great reflection this on the legendary astuteness of the devil, that he should be so forgetful of his own interests as to manufacture cheap bibles: but so it is; ignorance and persecution are prone to such false compliments.) Well! great is the uproar in Paris; the scribes, be sure of it—the ingenious, industrious men who copy bibles—very disinterestedly joining in the outcry. Faust is discovered—many bibles found at his lodgings; some of the books printed in his blood; a horrible fact, shown beyond all doubt in the red ink by which they are embellished; and loud and unanimous is the cry for fire and faggot to consume the magician. The wizard is flung into prison; and, to escape roasting alive as one in fealty to the fiend, he makes known his secret to the admiration of the world, and especially to the wonder and thanksgiving of the simple church. Alas! little did her fat and rubicund children, feeding quietly in her cells like worms in nuts, little did they suspect the mischief hidden in the discovery. Little thought they that the first creaking of Guttenberg's rude printing-press was, in the fulness of time, to be the knell of craft and ignorance. At that sound, had the monks had eyes, they might have beheld their saints turn pale and wince; they might have heard old, profitable, penny-turning relics shake and rattle: and—

“In urns and altars dying round
A drear and dying sound.”

At the moment Guttenberg pulled his first proof (the historian of the popes has very disingenuously avoided the fact) the Pope was fast in his first sleep: but suddenly his holiness awoke with a bounce, and for at least five seconds wondered if he were the Infallible or not. Strange! it may be thought that a little creaking at Mentz should make itself so very audible at Rome!

Our present purpose, however, is not to follow the Printer's Devil through all the windings of four centuries; but to speak of him as he is at the present day, after many and great mutations. That he gained his name as a reproach, in an age of darkness, is incontrovertible; many very respectable, tax-

paying people in France dying in the faith that, though Faustus had cleared himself with the too easy civic authorities, the devil must have had a finger in the printing, for all that. Hence, the Devil and Doctor Faustus became household words; and the Printer's Devil, though now philosophically received as a creature of light, survives to these times.

The Printer's Devil of our day is the humblest flamen at the shrine of the press. We would, did our too circumstantial conscience permit us, suppress all public knowledge of the fact; but the Printer's Devil of the nineteenth century is, in the social scale, estimated at very little above the errand-boy. Thus do length of days and familiar intercourse vulgarise the mysterious—make common-place the most dear. A youth running with a proof from the press of Guttenberg, or Caxton, or Wynkyn de Worde, was, so to speak, a messenger of state; the bearer of a miracle of art; the part and parcel of a mysterious body, sworn to maintain the secrets of their craft. Then, indeed, the Devil was somebody to be respected; and now is he—Peter Trampington, aged nine.

The Printer's Devil, however, of these days has one great advantage over the Devil of forty years ago. In his visits for copy—and believe it, reader, the calls of the Devil are anything but

“Angels' visits, few and far between,”

but daily; sometimes, if the publisher be a sanguine man, hourly,—in these, his unremitting visits upon authors, the Printer's Devil has not, like the devils of a bygone generation, to mount so many pair of stairs. Authors have, it must be confessed, come down a little: once, the Devil had to climb for them to the top of the homestead; and now, such is the progress of things, authors may be said to meet the Devil half-way. This is as it should be.

In the printing-office, the Devil is a drudge; yea, “a young and sweating devil.” There is no employment too dirty for him—no weight too heavy for his strength—no distance too far for him to walk: no, not walk, but run, or fly; for it is an axiom, that the Printer's Devil is never to walk—he is always to make haste: no matter how; he is to “make haste.”

—“so eagerly the fiend
O'er bog or steep, through strait, rough, dense, or rare,
With head, hands, wings or feet, pursues his way:
And swims, or sinks, or wades, or creeps, or flies.”

And the conscientious, pains-taking Printer's Devil, on an errand

for copy, is expected to emulate the indefinite action of the father-fiend. The vulgar errand-boy may saunter on the road; but the intelligent Devil—he who fetches and carries precious thoughts—he, the light-porter to the brain—the go-between of author and the press—he may not lounge and tarry like a common messenger; but, insensibly impressed by the consequence of his calling, by the wealth of which he is the depository, he, in his motion to and fro, must approach as near to flying as is permitted to the human anatomy.

The extraordinary probity of Printers' Devils—like many other virtues of the humble—has not been sufficiently wondered at. Be it our task to awaken the attention of the world to at once the beautiful confidence in human nature as daily illustrated in the literary character, and to the surpassing rectitude of Devils in general.

That the riches of the mind outvalue, to an inconceivable degree, all tangible wealth, whether in gems or metals, is a truth preached from a thousand pulpits—a truth we emblazon in our copy-books—a truth that even men of ten, twenty, forty thousand a year are in a condition to very placidly admit. How often, if we search the archives of the police, shall we find goldsmiths' porters—jewellers' shopmen—nay, the clerks of bankers—how often shall we find them wanting! Plate has been stolen—diamonds carried off—moneys embezzled; yes, men in trust have succumbed to the blandishments of the baser wealth, and become nought. But when—and we put the question with a thrill of triumph at our heart—when was a Printer's Devil ever known to embezzle his copy? When did he ever attempt to turn an article into money, and escape to France or America with the fruits of his wickedness? We answer for him—never. We call upon all the police magistrates, the Lord Mayor, and all the aldermen—we call upon these gentlemen, every one, to confound us if they can. No: our Printer's Devil, intrusted as he hourly is with valuables to which the regalia of the Tower—whatever Mr. Swift, the keeper of the same, may assert to the contrary—are as paste and foil-stones; made the bearer of thoughts more brilliant and more durable than virgin gold; a carrier of little packets outvaluing the entrails of Golconda; nay, single sheets, to which all the Mogul's dominions are, at least in the opinion of one man, as a few unprofitable mole-hills; the Devil freighted with this inconceivable treasure, despatched trustingly by its producer with this immortal wealth, goes unerringly to his destination; and with the innocence of a dove, and the meekness of a lamb, gives up his precious burden. He never betrays his trust—not he. The Printer's Devil takes not

the mental gold to unlawful crucible—offers not the precious paper to the felonious money-changer—seeks no loan upon the copy from the pawnbroker ; but with a fine rectitude, with a noble simplicity of purpose, gives up the treasure to the hand appointed to receive it, as though it were rags or dirt. The oyster, that breeds a jewel for the crown of an emperor, is not more unpresuming on its wealth than is the Printer's Devil on his costlier copy.

And now, gentle reader, does not the Printer's Devil present himself to your admiring imagination, despite his ink-stained hands and face, in colours of the brightest radiance ? Jostled in the street, or, it may be, triflingly bespattered by mud from his Mercurial heels, how little do you dream that the offending urchin, the hurrying Devil, has about him "something dangerous." You know it not ; but, innocent, mirthful as he seems, he is loaded with copy. He may be rushing, gambolling, jumping like a young satyr, and is withal the Devil to a newspaper. His looks are the looks of merriment : yet the pockets of his corduroy trousers may be charged with thunderbolts. He would not hurt a mouse ; and in his jacket slumbers lightning to destroy a ministry. Perhaps, for the whole Mint, he could not compass a sum in addition ; and yet, it rests with his integrity whether to-morrow morning the nation shall be saved from bankruptcy ; for deposited in his cap is an elaborate essay addressed to the ingenious traders in the Money Market ; an essay setting forth principles which, if adopted, shall in one fortnight transform beggared England into El Dorado. If the Printers' Devils, as a body, knew their strength, what darkness might they for a time bring upon the world ! A conspiracy among the gas-men would be matter for a jest, compared to the Cimmerian gloom produced by Printers' Devils, sworn to a simultaneous destruction of copy ! We own, this is a dangerous suggestion ; but, had we not a great faith in the natural goodness of our Devils, we might assure ourselves in their want of combination. Besides, it is just possible that the Devil may bear copy as a bishop's horse may bear his master ! without for one moment suspecting the wisdom, the learning, the piety, the charity and loving-kindness to all men, that he carries. We say, this is possible.

We trust, however, that we have uttered sufficient to obtain for our Devil respectful consideration in his street pilgrimages, should the reader, by the smutched face, the very dirty hands, the air of literary slovenliness about his wardrobe, and withal by a certain quickness of expression, a shrewdness of face, detect the fiend ; for, indeed, he has all these marks. The true Printer's

Devil is, after all, a very superior drudge. It would be unseemly in us to insist, that his constant intercourse with a certain class of individuals, whets his spirit, and endues him with a peculiar look of intelligence; but so it is; the Devil, especially the newspaper Devil, is as distinct an animal from the mere errand-boy, as is the wild ass of the desert from the ass of the sandman. Hence, should the reader meet with him, we crave for our Devil, by the virtue of what he may carry, respectful consideration. Consider it: are there not some Printers' Devils, nameless though they be, who may be considered almost classic? The Devil, for instance, who carried the proofs of the "Vicar of Wakefield" to Goldsmith: who, we will be sworn for him, rewarded his inky messenger with many a tester: the Devil, the constant Devil, who took copy from Johnson; Defoe's Devil; Dryden's Devil; the Devil who—but we will not number them: we leave it to the memory, to the imagination of the reader, to call up, and picture to himself the legion of Devils that have visited the sons of genius and of wretchedness: that now, climbing garret stairs; now, despatched to suburb hovels; and now to the squalor, the darkness, the misery of a gaol—for copy; have borne from thence to the press, thoughts that have crowned human nature as with a diadem; thoughts, sweet and sustaining as the air of heaven; thoughts, unfathomable as the sea, imperishable as the stars.

Yes; the Printer's Devil, in his day, has kept the best of company; though, be it allowed, the parties visited have not always lived at the better end of the town, or at an easy distance from the ground floor. Neither has he always found them at their venison; or, the cloth removed, quaffing Burgundy; but, oftener, at humblest cates. He has, however, had great privileges. Frequently, when the poor author—the human civet-cat, cherished by some Lintot—has, for sundry reasons, eschewed the publicities of the town, making to himself a hermitage at Barnes, or Islington, the Printer's Devil has had the right of call, all other visitors sedulously barred out. Civet—no, we mean copy—must still be had; and, certain as the village clock, came the Devil.

Many and various are the pilgrimages of the Devil for what is now the daily food of a reading generation—the *pabulum vite* of our age; the important copy. In these errands, the Devil has his small delights, as well as his drudgery. Visiting the spirits, whose peculiar boast it is to soften and refine the ruggedness and selfishness of life, the Devil, doubtless, in his own little person, proves the high mission of such ladies and gentlemen; and is often a practical example of their theoretic benevolence. For

instance, the political philanthropist, at the very hour inditing the sufferings and wrongs of a tax-ground, bread-denied people ; at the moment, glowing from head to heels with the hottest indignation at the selfishness of the rich, and with tears mixing in his ink for the miseries of the poor ; he cannot suffer the little Devil, despatched a two or three mile journey, through wet and cold, for the invaluable copy, to shiver with a wet skin in a passage. No ; he forthwith orders him to the fire ; and whilst the philanthropist turns his periods, the Devil, it may be, helps to turn the spit ; and the copy done, at length departs for the printer, with a belly full, and, perhaps, sixpence. Such, we are inclined to believe, was ever the custom of the late Mr. Cobbet : hence, we presume, it was always a contest among the Devils to obtain the honourable advantage of a mission to him.

Mr. Macquotient, though a mathematician, had the best sense of the wants and qualities of the Printer's Devil. Thrice a week the imp attended at the lodgings of the mathematician — we believe they were in the rules of the Fleet—with proofs of "Logarithms !" Pretty, light, interesting reading for the little Devil. Mr. Macquotient, however, did not deem a perusal of the figures of itself a sufficient advantage to the quick-witted urchin. No ; it was his custom — and we dwell upon it, for it was most worthy of imitation by all mathematicians, philosophers, and others, "in the press" — to award to the early coming Devil the benevolence of hot coffee, *ad libitum*, and two rolls liberally buttered ! More : the Devil rarely left the mathematician without receiving three-pence ; sometimes a tester. We doubt not that the tables of Logarithms edited by Mr. Macquotient (would we could point out the edition !) are superior to any other. Sure we are, the Devil thought so.

The Printer's Devil—if the author, by chance, live in respectable lodgings—has a mortal enemy in the landlady. She, with little respect for literature in general, thinks only of one passage—that of her house. With no consciousness of the moral majesty of the press, she is keenly alive to the muddy feet of Peter Trampington (Devil). More : it may happen that a footboy shall appertain to the establishment ; a young gentleman, whose green, succinct, button-bedecked jacket, very white collar, particularly clear face, combed, shining hair, and cut and dried manners, are one and all in great danger from the visits of the ragged, easy, dirty-visaged, care-nothing Devil from the office. The urchins meet in the passage, and the aristocracy of the footboy is perilled by the democracy of the press. The vanity of ignorance cries out against printer's ink. Hence, who can

wonder that the following note should be written by an outraged landlady to an author-lodger ?

— *Street*, — *Square*.

SIR,—It is to me the painfallest annoyance to assure you that, in consequence of the many *nasty, dirty little boys*, constantly coming to you, I must, for the respectability of my establishment, decline you as a lodger. Yesterday, Julius's cotton gloves, black as pitch, and not fit to wait at dinner, and all through your *nasty, dirty little boys*, who will talk to him. Believe me, sir, I give you warning with much pain, but I am answerable for Julius's morals to the parish; and it was only three month's ago I paid two pound ten for his livery.

Your humble servant,

ELIZABETH RENTINGTON.

P.S.—Should be most happy, sir, to keep you as a lodger, with this understanding—without the going and coming of the *nasty, dirty little boys*.

It is thus Mrs. Rentington speaks of Peter and his tribe. Peter is a Devil; therefore to the illiterate, he is no other than a *nasty, dirty little boy*. And yet Peter — and there are many Peters Devils—has as much intelligence as would, without cotton gloves, make up twenty Juliuses. Yes, for Peter is, by his very calling, bookish: nay, Peter is literary, and has been known to escape out at the very top of the house, and lying on the tiles, has conned "The Arabian Nights." Nay, more, Peter once poured forth his yearning soul in the following lines (a true copy):—

"I wish not for Aladdin's lamp,
'Tis fed by Satan's pride:
Lest worldly joys my virtue damp,
May no princess be my bride."

Reader, do not, with the lodging-house landlady, think the Printer's Devil only a *nasty, dirty little boy*. Though he be drudge to the press, he is of the press; hence, should you even once in your life tempt the perils of type, treat our subject courteously, liberally—give the Devil more than his due.

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